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The Spiritual CHYMIST:

OR,

SIX DECADS

Of Divine

Meditations

On ſeveral Subjects.

With a ſhort Account of the Authours Life.

By *William Spurſtow* D. D.
Sometime Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Hackney* near *London*.

Pſalm 104. 34.
My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.

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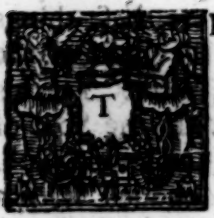
THE PREFACE TO THE READER.



He natural Sun in the Firmament, whether we consider the vastness of its Globe, or the splendour and dazling of its light, or the variety and beneficialness of its motion, and operation, attended with duration and perpetuity; is the top, and Prince of all inanimate beings. Yet the least inſ & that the most *Artificial Microſcope* can diſcern Life in, is able to weigh against it, and *in genere entium* is more perfect. How excellent a being then is the Soul of Man, that doth not only outstrip the Sun, but all other sensitive things, even those that have the most live-

ἰy μιμήματα τ' ἀνθρωπίνης ζωῆς, as the Philoſopher calls them, which the Oratour tranſlates *Virtutum ſimulacra*, the faint imitations of Reaſon. Now, among the many demonſtrations of the excellency of the Humane Soul, the operations of it do abundantly witneſs for it, and among them, to go no farther, the operations of thoſe two ſupream Faculties, the Underſtanding and Will, in apprehending, and loving God. Theſe are more excellent than the Suns enlightning the world. I chooſe to inſtance in that, becauſe the ornament, beauty, and life of all things depend upon it; for to what purpoſe were theſe things made, were it not that the light of the Sun made them *Proximè viſibilia?* Yet this is nothing in compare with the Soul of Man, in its apprehending and loving God. This ſpeaks the Subject endued with a principle not to be tranſcended (but only in degree) in perfection. You cannot have more perfect operations in heaven in kind, though you may in degree. Angels, and Souls made perfect, it is true, do this more intirely, more perfectly, more conſtantly, and unweariedly: But in knowing God, and making choice of him, in loving, and cleaving to him, the ſouls of holy men do, according to the capacity of the preſent

ſent ſtate, communicate with them.

Now theſe two have a mutual aſpect on each other, and the happy Conjunction of Knowledge and Devotion, ſpeak the Soul Regular and Uniform in its Acts, and to be in a good meaſure of ſpiritual health. When Knowledge doth guide and ſteer as it were Devotion, and Devotion doth in a kind of gratitude warm, and enflame our Knowledge; which otherwiſe is apt to chil, and grow cold, as experience ſhews in many knowing Creatures, in whom the waters of the Sanctuary have put out the fire. And as the ſeparation of the love of God from the knowledge of God, breeds ſwarms of hypocrites in the viſible Church; ſo the ſeparation of the knowledge of God from affection to God, begets a ſtrange kinde of wilde fire in the Spirits of men; and while they have Zeal for God (which is nothing but Affection in its full ſtature, got out of it ſwadling cloaths) without Knowledge, they are but like a Ship without a Rudder or Ballaſt, that is a prey to every Pirat; and if it miſs them, is carried by its own levity, and the winds impetuouſneſs, on its own ruine. When therefore the bleſſed Spirit comes to work in the ſoul, he firſt enlightens the mind, and ſets open, τὰς πύλας φωτὸς, the gates

of light, and then the Will ecchoes to the Underſtanding; and certainly that action is moſt congruous to ſo excellent a being as the Soul, when the Mind takes its aim before the Affections ſhoot. For otherwiſe, though the action doth prove materially good, yet it is no more commendation to him that doth it, than to him that ſhuts both his eyes, and then contingently hits the mark. The apprehenſions and affections of Mans Soul, being thus regulated, and conjoyned, do admirably fit and diſpoſe for that we call Meditation, (I mean Divine and Chriſtian Meditation) which is the off-ſpring of a good heart, and a good head. How excellent and ſweet an employment this is, none can know, but thoſe that have taſted it, and have the skill to ſpiritualize all objects, and providences, turning every thing by a Divine Chymiſtry, *in ſuccum, & ſanguinem*, into ſpirit and nouriſhment. Making the Word, and Works, and Ordinances of God as ſo many Rounds to climb up to a more clear Viſion, and fervent love of God; and then deſcending make theſe a clear Mirrour wherein they ſee themſelves, and to be like windows, to let in that light into the private and dark receſſes of the heart, that diſcovers the hidden works of darkneſs;

and

and ſo provokes the ſoul to endeavour a more through purgation of it ſelf; which it is the more eaſily exſtimulated to, being under a deep ſenſe of Gods purity, and a ſerious affection to be like him. But this Duty of Divine and Spiritual Meditation, is a thing that in this degenerate age the generality of Chriſtians are utter ſtrangers to, and very hardly brought to the practice of. Though there was never any time wherein the thoughts and minds of men were more buſie and active, and the helps, inducements, and incouragements more plentiful and cogent; and the calls and invitations on Gods part, both by his Word and Works more frequent: Yet it is a work of inexpreſſible difficulty, to bring theſe ſubtil and volatile acts of the mind to a fixation, to make any conſiderable immoration, upon thoſe ſubjects that are in themſelves of the greateſt worth, and to us of the neareſt conſequence. Now conſidering, that man is by God made a providential Creature, and doth naturally caſt up damages, and gain, and project the obtaining the one, and avoiding the other; I have therefore thought it worth the enquiring, what ſhould be the reaſon of their awkneſs to this beneficial employment; and conſidering that Knowledge and Love are the two things;

things that disposse for it, I have thought it might arise from some defect in these, and sometimes thus argued: Surely, this wisdome is too high for fools, that men that have incrassated their souls, and almost extinguished this Divine Lamp, by shooting themselves so deep in sensuality and worldlinesse, that they who have wellnigh forgot their God, their own being, their happinesse, should ever be able to mount so high as Meditation. But when I considered, how stupid or sottish soever these men were by debauchery, or pretended to be through want of education, yet they were ingeniously wicked, and could in their minds lay Schemes of villany, and that their phantasies were alwaies minting and forging wicked devices, which they could in their second thoughts revise and polish, and, like a Second Edition, make the Model to be *Auctior & nequior*, larger and more wicked. I then saw no excuse for them that had wit enough to be wicked, but none to be good. And therefore looking farther into the ground of it, I found it arose from the second, want of love to God, which is the stream that sets all the Wheels of the soul a going; the true Spring of motion, and which strongly conglutinates all the musings of the soul.

For

For to this work of Meditation there is not ſomuch required vaſtneſs of knowledg, as rectitude of affections; not ſo much the head of a Schollar, as the heart of a Chriſtian. Neither is it hindred by any thing more than by carnal, and low affections, which both dim the eye of the underſtanding, and clog the appetite that it cannot hunger after, or reliſh theſe heavenly and ſpiritual dainties. Beſides, there is this further reaſon to be given, That this part of Religion is inward, and removed from the eyes of Spectators. Now, if it be difficult to bring men to a form of Religion any further than advantage, intereſt, conveniencies, and the like, will ſtand with it, (which is the true reaſon many cry down all Forms, becauſe they feel their luſts pinched by them:) Much more difficult is it to bring men to thoſe inward, and vital acts of Religion, which would not only impriſon, but mortifie, not onely check and ſtun, but eradicate, and exterminate ſin. As for that Religion which the Apoſtle *Peter* calls, ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας, The hidden man of the heart. And the Apoſtle *Paul*; ὁ Ἰουδαῖος ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, being a Jew inwardly, περιτομὴ καρδίας, ἐν πνεύματι, the circumciſion of the heart in the Spirit, and in another place, καινὴ κτίσις, The new Crea-

Creature, which ſtands in a ſelf-exinanition in converſing with God, in a ſeparation from all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs, in conforming our ſelves to Chriſt, and living in obedience to his Laws: Theſe are looked on by a great many, but as *Platonick Idea's*, or as an *Eutopia*, or the Philoſophers Happy Man, things that are *entia rationis*, the dreams of melancholly fancies, and not worth the troubling our ſelves about.

How much do we then owe to thoſe noble and generous Souls, that in charity to our ignorance, and dulneſs, have given us a proof of the employment of their minds, and have ſo freely unboſomed themſelves to us, in their Meditations, and Soliloquies? In which we have the moſt free and genuine workings of their ſouls; Theſe being the honey in the combs of their labour and induſtry. Certainly, *Chriſtian Reader*, thy ſoul cannot but cleave to ſuch perſons, whoſe drift and deſign thou ſeeſt it is to exalt God, and ſet forth his Divine Perfections. Doſt thou not feel a ſtrange alteration in thy ſoul, while thou doſt but air thy ſelf at thoſe flames that heated their ſouls? Doſt thou not finde thy heart glowing within thee, while thou art converſing with their labours, and while light is reflected.

flected upon thee from their discourses? Canst thou look upon such as less than Cherubims conversing in the flesh? Is any Oratory more piercing, and ravishing, than the Meditation of God in his divine perfections, communicating himself to us fully and freely in the best way through his Son? Is any zeal more commendable than that which is spent in consuming the lusts of thy own heart? or any desires more justifiable than the pantings and thirstings for him that thirsted after our thirst? Or doth any time run off more smoothly, and which thou canst reflect upon the spending of, with more comfort and satisfaction, than that which is spent in such holy flights of the soul? O blessed work and employment, and happy are those souls that do continually live in it!

In this sweet, and blessed work, was this Reverend Author much employed. Some tastes of which are here offered to thee, though but a part of what he intended, *Ten Decads* at least, being what he had proposed to tender to publick view, but God took him to himself before he had compleated them.

But before I close this Preface, I cannot but speak a few words of the Author, Dr. *William Spurstow*, who as he lived beloved of his friends, so he died, of all his friends much

much lamented, not ſo much for their own, as the publick loſs of him, being a perſon of ſuch an excellent ſpirit, that he was many waies uſeful, and ſerviceable. I ſhall not ſay any thing of his abilities of mind and judgement, ſince it appears by thoſe things extant of his, that he was none of thoſe *Præcocia ingenia*, *Apuleius* ſpeaks of. Thoſe Rathe-ripe Wits, as one calls them, that are fair in the bloſſom, but fail in the fruit. But he held ſuch an excellent tenour in his Miniſterial labours, that the more wiſe and judicious any were, the more they were delighted in him, and cleaved to him.

But there were ſome Graces in him in higher and more eminent degree, that may ſpeak him an example to us that ſurvive. Such were:

Firſt, His profound, and real humility, and that is a root-grace that hath many in it; and this is the true aſcention of the ſoul: For as the firſt ſtep downward was by Pride, ſo the firſt ſtep to heaven is by Humility. And as man did deſcend in aſcending to be like God, ſo we aſcend in deſcending to be like Chriſt in Humility. This was the glory of this Author, though he had ſingular worth, yet he alwaies expreſt a ſingular humility, not only in denying thoſe

thoſe things, which ordinarily men make the fuel to pride, none of which he wanted, but in condeſcending to thoſe of low degree, if he might but be ſerviceable to them. Which was apparent in that freedome of acceſs, and converſe with thoſe, between him and whom there was otherwiſe a great diſparity; eſpecially in that humbleneſs of minde he ſhewed after any large receits, or performances, wherein he ſhewed himſelf like *Moſes*, though his face ſhone he knew it not.

Secondly, His Charity both in giving and forgiving, the latter of which, as it is moſt noble, ſo it is the moſt difficult, and that which is peculiar to Chriſts Diſciples. As for the former, though the world might expect more viſible and pompous demonſtrations of it, yet that charity is beſt, which, like the waters of *Shiloh*, run ſoftly, and the more private in this caſe the better. Our Saviour would have our good works ſhine, and not blaze. Now, that he was not deficient in this, may appear in that he was no hoarder, nor left he any Sums behind him; by which it appears plainly, that he lived to the utmoſt (if not beyond) the extent of his In-come, which alſo in vulgar eſtimation was double to the reality.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, To this may be added his Meekneſs, and Patience, the natural reſult of Humility; in which graces he was eminent, being ſeldom or never tranſported by paſſion; or if at any time thoſe paſſions which do repugn that grace did ariſe, they ſoon had a counterbuff from the divine principle that was in him. He alwaies had an innocent & grateful chearfulneſs in his converſe, that rendred it very acceptable; being very free from that moroſity of ſpirit, which many times is like a cloud in a Diamond, and like a Curtain before a Picture. And yet as the ſweeteſt Roſe hath its prickles, and the induſtrious Bee (that makes the healing and mollifying Honey and Wax) her ſting: So he had a ſting of holy Zeal, which wiſdom had the conduct of, that it was not put forth upon every trivial provocation; he knew when, and where, and how far to ſhew it; and in Gods Cauſe his Zeal was better tempered, than like a brittle blade, to fly in ſhivers, and wound by-ſtanders; but it was true mettal, and would cut deep, ſo as to leave impreſſions behind it.

Fourthly, Add to this his peaceable diſpoſition, a great Ornament to Chriſtianity. It was his principle, and practiſe, not to have that by contention, he might have by peace; and for peace ſake, though he durſt not

not ſell the Truth, yet he did often *Cedere de jure*, depart from his right, and that, *Ne Evangelium detrimenti aliquid capiat*, for the Goſpels ſake, that it might not ſuffer by him. He loved thoſe of a peaceable ſpirit, and was grieved at the contrary ſpirit, and practice in any, though his friends. He did heartily bewail our Diviſions: and how deſirous he was to obey thoſe commands of the Pſalmiſt and the Apoſtle, *Purſue peace, enſue peace*, noting both the vehemency and ſwiftneſs of the proſecution: If ſome did know, they would not, it may be, be ſatisfied; and if others did know, they would, it may be, be offended: and therefore it is beſt to leave that to him whoſe judgement is according to truth. But I remember I am to write a Preface, not a Narrative of his Life. He was a lover of good men. Loving and faithful in his Relations; a good Child, a good Father, a good Husband, a good Brother, a good Maſter, a good Neighbour, a good Friend, a good Governour, a good Subject, a good Miniſter; and all, becauſe he was a good Chriſtian. He was full of heavenly Ejaculations, contented and patient under the loſs of his deſired Relations. And as they ſay, the Swan ſings ſweetly before his death: So was his heart, drawing near his change,

change, full of thankfulneſs, being like a Veſſel that wanted vent. For being graciouſly preſerved in the Viſitation, and reſtored to his friends, he expreſſed in all his Converſes with them, a deep ſenſe of Gods mercy, and a fear leſt we ſhould ſoon forget it, and grow cold in our returns of praiſe, and obedience; and therefore did adviſe that we would become Monitors to one another, and call upon one another, not to forget that God who had ſo eminently preſerved us. Thus was the bleſſed Spirit of God tuning him for eternal praiſes, and winding his heart up to that ſweet and heavenly work, it pleaſed God by a ſhort and ſweet paſſage to take him unto. His death was not ſo much ſudden, as ſpeedy. Sudden Death is evil, when Death finds a man unprepared, but ſpeedy Death is a great mercy. The *Prodromi* and Harbingers of Death being many times more terrible than Death; which made a good man ſay, *I bleſs God, I fear not death, yet I dare not ſay but I fear dying.* Meaning, that the beſt Chriſtians have ſomething of nature in them. The Jews, among the ſeveral waies of dying they reckon up, ſay, that of *Moſes* is the beſt, who died at the mouth of the Lord; God took away his ſoul with a kiſs. Yet Cenſorious World-

lings

lings are ready to make ſtrange gloſſes, and comments, upon ſuch paſſages of providence, which it would become them rather with a holy ſilence to adore, than with a bold curioſity to pry into. Let them remember that known ſaying, *Qualis vita, finis ita*, He cannot have an ill death, that leads a good life. I would therefore exhort thee, and all others, ſo to live, that we may have that εὐθανασία *Auguſtus* the Emperour prayed for, and that many Saints have (if it were the will of God) deſired, in both acceptations of the Word, in the preparation of ſoul, and the eaſineſs of diſſolution. That the knot of life may rather be untied than cut; and that our Souls may go, like Ships richly fraught, with full Sails, upon a calm Sea, under a gentle Gale, into the Haven of Happineſs. So praies he

Qui ——

A longè ſequitur veſtigia ſemper adorans.

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The Spiritual Chymiſt,
OR
Divine Meditations on ſeveral Subjects.

Meditation I.

Upon a mote in the Eye.

OF what a ſtrange temper is the *Eye*, which a ſmall *mote* can ſo extreamly trouble, and a wide *world* cannot ſatisfie? and what a ſtrange vanity is the *world*, a ſingle duſt of which is more powerful to afflict and torment, than an *entire confluence* of all its pleaſures can be, to give eaſe, or to delight? For were the globe of the whole earth turned into a delicious *Paradiſe*, that the eye might behold nothing but a perpetual

ſpring of beauty, & that every ſenſe might be continually feaſted with the choiſeſt objects that ſuch a Garden could produce; yet alas a *corn* of its ſand, an *atome* of its duſt put or lodged accidentally in the eye, would create ſuch violent ſhootings, ſuch keen prickings and burnings, as would ſoon force a man to ſend forth complaints, that his anguiſh is far above his pleaſure, and that he had much rather forgoe the one, than undergoe conſtantly the other. Oh! what a weak and empty buble is all wordly happineſs, which breaks and vaniſheth into nothing, by the power of a ſmall duſt? and what a matchleſs difference is there between heavenly and earthly comforts, when a drop of the one can ſweeten a briny ſea of ſorrow, and a world of the other cannot aſſwage the anguiſh which ariſeth from a ſingle mote? Lord, therefore let not me be among the number of thoſe that receive their good things in this life. I ask onely a *pittance* for my *paſſage*, but not an *abundance* for my *portion* in them; yea though thou ſhould give me no Kid to make merry with, yet will I not murmur at thy bounty to *Prodigals*: if thou wilt ſay, Son, All that is *laid up* is thine, though thou haſt little or nothing of what is *laid out*; but I will pray

pray, Turn Lord mine eyes from beholding, and my heart from affecting earthly vanities, and fix all my desires upon heaven, that I may look and long for it, in which there is nothing that can offend; but every thing that will delight and satisfie to Eternity.

Meditation II.

Upon a piece of battered Plate.

It is methinks a meet Emblem of a suffering Saint, who by afflicting stroaks may lose somewhat of his *accidental beauty*; but nothing of his *real worth*. In the Plate, the *fashion* is onely marred; but the *substance* is neither diminished or embased. If you bring it to the *Scale*, it weighs as much as it did; if you try it by the *Touchstone*, it is as good silver as it was. And is it not thus with a Saint when bruised and broken with many sore pressures? His lustre and repute with men may be prejudiced and eclipsed by them, but not his *person* or his *worth* with God; if he be weighed in his unerring *ballance*, he will not be found the lighter; if exami-

ned by his *Teſt*, he will not be eſteemed the leſs precious. It is not the *Croſs* that makes vile, but *ſin*; not the *paſſive evils* which we ſuffer, but the *active evils* which we do. The one may render us *unamiable* to men, but the other makes us *unholy* before God; The one raſe the *Casket*, and the other makes a *flaw* in the *Jewel*. Happy and wiſe therefore is that man who maketh *Moſes* his choyce to be his pattern in chuſing Affliction rather than Sin; eſteeming it better to be an oppreſſed *Hebrew* that builds the Houſes and Pallaces of Brick, than an uncircumciſed *Egyptian* to dwel in them: for when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.

Meditation III.

Upon the Galaxia *or milkie-way.*

THe *milkie way*, according to *Ariſtotle*, is a *ſhine* or *Brightneſs* cauſed by the joynt raies of a multitude of imper-

imperceptible Stars, and not a *Meteor*: But it is not my purpose so much to finde out, or determine what it is, as to meditate a little upon the place where it is. The Milkie Way is in Heaven, the true *Canaan* and Land of promise, in which Rivers of pleasure and sweetness do everlastingly overflow; and while we are absent from it, we are like *Israel* in the Desart, apt to complain of daily wants, and to be discouraged with various fears. How greatly therefore is it becoming us who profess to seek such a Country so long earnestly after it in our desires, and to travel towards it in patience; not fearing the difficulty of the way, but animating our selves with the perfection of the end, in which rest and *glory*, which are here divided, shall both meet, and for ever dwell together? If *Mare rubrum*, the *Red Sea* of Affliction, be the passage; *Via lactea*, the Milkie way of life and bliss will be the end. And is it not better to wade through a Sea of blood to a Throne of glory, than to glide along the smooth stream of pleasure unto an Abysse of endless misery? A good end gives an amiableness to the means, though never so unpleasing; The bitter Potion which brings health is gladly taken down by the Patient:

But Poyſon in a golden Cup, when made as pleaſing as Art and Skill can temper it, can never be welcome to any who underſtand the ſweetneſs of life, or dread the terrour of death. The way is good (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) if it be to a Feaſt, though through a blind Lane; if to an Execution not good, though through the *faireſt ſtreet* of the City: himſelf was bidden to a Marriage-Dinner, and was to go through divers Lanes and Allies, croſſing the high ſtreet he met with one led thorow it to be executed; he told his Auditors, *Non quà, ſed quò*, not the *way*, but the term *whither* it led, was to be thought upon. Lord, then let not me be anxious what the path is that I tread, whether it be plain or thorny, pleaſant or difficult, bloudy or milkie, ſo it lead to thee, who art *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending of bleſſedneſs, but to walk chearfully in it till I come to thee my everlaſting reſt.

Meditation

Meditation IV.

Upon a Picture and a Statue.

IN what a differing manner is the Image and repreſentation of the ſame perſon brought into theſe two peices of Art? In the one it is effected by the ſoft and ſilent touches of the Penſil, which happily convey *likeneſs* and *beauty* together: In the other it is formed by the rough and loud ſtroakes of the hammer, and by the deep cuttings and Sculptures of Inſtruments of Steel: In as ſtrange and far differing way is the heavenly Image of God formed in the ſouls of new Converts, when firſt made partakers of the Divine Nature. In ſome, God *paints* (as I may ſo ſpeak) his own Likeneſs by a ſtill and calm delineation of it upon the Table of their hearts: In others, he *Carves* it by afflicting them with a great meaſure of terrours, and wounding their ſouls with a thorow ſenſe both of the guilt and defilement of Sin. But in this diverſity of working, God is no way neceſſitated, or limited by the diſpoſition and temper of the matter, as other Agents are; but is

freely guided by the Counſel of his own will, which is the ſole rule and meaſure of all his Actions towards the Creature, as his Word is of theirs towards him. Lord, therefore do with me what thou pleaſeſt; Let me be but thine, and I will not preſcribe thy Wiſedome the way to make me thine: *Bruiſe, break, wound,* yea *kill,* Lord; ſo that I may be made alive again by thy power, and bear thy holy Image, according to which I was firſt made, and to which by thy grace and might only I can be reſtored.

Meditation V.

Upon a Graff.

IT was an ancient ſaying of the Rabbins, *Lumen ſupernum nunquan deſcendit ſine indumento,* that Divine Light doth never deſcend without ſome Cloathing: While we are vailed with Mortality, Truth muſt vail it ſelf too, that it may the better ſute our capacity; for in this our imperfect Eſtate its native *Luſtre* is too exceſſive for our weak eyes, and its ſpiritual *being* too refined for our narrow underſtandings,

which

which do imbibe and take in their objects by the mediation of the ſenſes with which they have contracted an entire league and amity. Obſervable therefore it is, that in Scripture the higheſt and moſt divine Myſteries of the Goſpel are *imbodied* in the terrene Expreſſions of *Metaphors*, *Similitudes*, *Allegories*, and ſo repreſented to our view. Thus the efficacy and ſecreſie of the *New Birth* is ſet forth by the *Wind's blowing* when and where it liſteth; The *Reſurrection* of the body by *Corn ſown*, which is not quickned except it dye: The *Glory* of Heaven by a *Marriage Feaſt*: And among others, our *Myſtical union* with Chriſt by the *Inſition of a Graff* into a forrain ſtock, which aptly ſhews forth the entire dependance we have upon Chriſt, without whom we can do nothing; and how alſo we, that are at a diſtance from him, are truly made one with him. But yet methinks it is matter both of delight and wonderment, to ſee how much the *ſpiritual* implantation out-goes the *natural*. In the *natural*, *ſweet Graffs* are adviſed to be ſet in *ſoure ſtocks*; for though it be proper to the ſtock to be *vehiculum alimenti*, the conveyance of the nouriſhment; yet *virtus temperamenti*, the quality of the Iuyce comes from

the Graff, and not from the Stock. But in the *ſpiritual* it is quite otherwiſe, the Graff is vile and worthleſs; but the root, to which it is united, is precious, The *Scion of a Crab* is put into a *tree of life*; the *wild Olive*, into the *true Olive*, and is thereby ſo changed, as that it can no more degenerate into what it was, but ſhall for ever abide what the Almighty power of grace hath made it to be, a branch of righteouſneſs bringing forth the fruits of new obedience to the glory of him who hath made this bleſſed Change.

Meditation VI.

Upon a Glaſs without a foot.

THat which chiefly renders this Glaſs of little or no eſteem, is not the *Brittleneſs* of it, which is common to every Glaſs, but an *unaptneſs* for uſe and ſervice through a particular defect, in regard it hath onely a capacity to receive what is put into it, and no ability to retain it unleſs ſome hand, or other forrain aide ſupply the place of a natural foot. In the hand it is uſeful to con-

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vey drink to the thirſty, or a Cordial to the Patient; but as ſoon as it is out of the hand through meer weakneſs it falls and ſpills the liquor, if not ruine it ſelf. O how lively doth this imperfect Glaſs reſemble the beſt Condition of Believers on this ſide heaven, who in themſelves are not onely *brittle*, and ſo apt to be irrecoverably broken; but are alſo totally *unable* to retain either Grace or Comfort with which Chriſt is pleaſed to fill them, unleſs he bear and hold them alwaies in his hand? And, O how great is the care and love of Chriſt, to preſerve ſuch Frail Creatures to life, and to honour ſuch weak Inſtruments in his conſtant ſervice? Who can think upon this goodneſs of Chriſt, and not be tranſported with Raptures and Ecſtaſies in the deep admiration of it? Who can believe that ſure Salvation that is in him, out of whoſe hand no man can pluck us, and not paſſionately deſire it? Is it not better with us, than it was with us in *Adam*, who had *Feet* to ſtand upright, but no *Hand* which might preſerve him from falling? Free-will hath made many Servants; but hath it ever made one Son? Are not all that are ſaved Children of grace? Let others then magnify Natures Power, and like-

ſick-

ſick men talk confidently of walking, when upon tryal they cannot ſtand: I ſhall alwayes deſire to have a due ſenſe of my own emptineſs and weakneſs, and to make this my daily prayer, that Chriſt would alwaies fill me with his grace, hold me by his hand, and uſe me ever in his ſervice.

Meditation VII.

Upon the ſight of a Lilly and a Violet.

THeſe two Flowers brought to my Mind a ſaying of *Hierom* to this effect, *That it is better, and more honourable, to be a Lilly than a Violet*: Which, when ſtripped of its Metaphorical Cloathing comes to thus much, That, to be alwayes pure is more commendable, than to bear the bluſh of a Sin: Spotleſs Innocency doth far exceed the greateſt Penitency. A Truth queſtionleſs it is beyond Controverſie, and no way needing the aid of the School to determine, that *Innocens eſt præſtantior pœnitente*; the Innocent is more worthy

worthy than any Penitent. Innocency being the only Robe of Glory, with which Man was covered when firſt Created: and of which had he not deveſted himſelf, he had never experienced *ſhame*, or *ſorrow*; they both being Paſſions that had their entrance into the World with Sin, and ſhall in the ſame Moment with it Die and Expire. But yet, next to this *Virgin Purity from Sin*, *The moſt deſirable thing is true and unfeigned Penitency for Sin*; Which though it cannot reſtore a Man to his Primitive State; Time Loſt, and Innocency, being two irrecoverable things; yet it will (through Gods Ordination) abundantly capacitate him for Mercy and Pardon. When *Ephraim* Smote upon the Thigh, and was aſhamed, becauſe he bare the reproach of his Youth, how earneſtly did God remember him: *Is Ephraim my dear Son?* When the *Prodigal* returns a *Penitent*, how affectionately doth his Father imbrace him, and falling upon his Neck kiſs him? how doth he cut off, and prevent a part of his Confeſſion, which he was purpoſed with himſelf to have made, by his ſpeedy calling for the *Ring*, the *Robe*, the *Shooes*, to adorn him, and the *fatted Calf* to Feaſt him? O bleſſed Lord! how willingly would I therefore (who have

have nothing of the unſpotted purity of the *Lilly*) partake plentifully of the Tincture of the *Violet?* How fain would I, who have had a *Forehead* to commit Sin before thee, have a Face to bluſh for Sin done againſt thee? My *Sins* are as the ſand of the Sea for number, O that my *Tears* were as the *Water* of the Sea for abundance. But who, Lord, can make me of a Proud and unhallowed Sinner, a real and broken Convert but thy ſelf? That Grace, by which mine whole Man muſt be moulded to a Penitential Frame, is altogether thine: heart, hand, eyes, tongue, cannot in the leaſt move without thee: they are lifeleſs Members till thou quicken them; yea Rebellious till thou ſubdue them: do thou therefore, by a powerful Energie, fit every part for its proper duty; let my *hand* ſmite the Breaſt, as the fountain and root from whence all mine Iniquities do ſpring; let my *tongue* confeſs them, mine *eye* mourn for them, my *face* bluſh, and my *heart* bleed for them: then ſhall I unfainedly ſay, and acknowledg, *My ruine is from my ſelf, but in thee is my help, O Lord.*

Meditation VIII.

Upon a Crum going the wrong way.

WHat more mean and contemptible thing can there be than a *ſingle Crum*, either in regard of its doing leaſt hurt, or effecting the leaſt good; and yet, like the Tongue which St. *James* ſaith, is a little Member, *extollit ſeſe*, it boaſteth greater Matters: in the *Mouth* (it is true) it hath ſcarce ſubſtance enough to be felt; but in the *Throat* it is ſuch as can hardly be indured. If it deſcend into the Stomach, it can contribute nothing to the ſupport of Life; but if it miſs the due paſſage to it, how often doth it threaten Death? and ſometimes alſo effect it: O how frail and mutable is the Life of Man; which is not onely Jeoparded by Inſtruments of War and Slaughter, which are made to deſtroy, but by an *Hair*, a *Raiſin-Stone*, a *Feather*, a *Crum*, and a thouſand ſuch inconſiderable things, which have a power to extinguiſh Life, but none to preſerve it? How

How neceſſary then is it to get Grace into the Heart, when the Life that we have, hangs thus continually in ſuſpence before us; and, how circumſpect ſhould we be of ſmall ſins, which create as great dangers to the ſoul, as the other things can to the Body? They that live in the Pale of the Church periſh more by ſilent and Whiſpering Sins, than by Crying and Loud Sins; in which though there be leſs *Infamie*, there is oft times the greater danger, in regard they are moſt eaſily fallen into, and moſt hardly repented of; like knots in fine Silk, which are ſooner made than in a Cord or Cable, but with far more difficulty are unlooſed again. Let us therefore (who often ſay, that a Man may Live of a little) think alſo of how much leſs a man may Die, and miſcarry, not in his Body onely but in his Soul alſo.

Meditation IX.

Upon two Lights in a Room.

WHat an *Amicable*, as well as *Amiable* thing is Light? for theſe

theſe two Tapers which enlighten the ſame Room, do not ſhine with a *Devided*, or with a *Confounded*, but with an *United* Light, as the *Opticks* do clearly demonſtrate by the diſtinct ſhaddows which they caſt: and yet the Eye which is benefitted by both of them, to a more full and perfect diſcerning of its objects, cannot difference the raies and ſtrictures that flow from them, or aſſigne, which is the Light that comes from the one, or from the other. Such I have ſometimes thought is the Harmony between the *Natural Light of Gifts*, and the *Supernatural of Grace*, meeting in the ſame Perſon; though they be both differing in the Original, yet in the Subject, in which they are ſeated, they ſhine not with a *Divided* or a *Confounded*, but with an *United* Light: and in their Efflux and Emanation ſo conſpire, as that they greatly better him in whom they are conjoyned, and caſt a mutual luſtre alſo upon each other: One being as the *Gold* which adorns the Temple, and the other as the *Temple* which ſanctifies the Gold. Let no Man therefore deſpiſe the Light of Gifts, as needleſs to the perfection of a Chriſtian; nor yet ſo magnifie it as to be injurious to the Light of Grace,

Grace, no more than he would put out one of his Eyes as uſeleſs, becauſe when he winks with the one, he can ſee as well with the other: there may be a reaſon ſometimes to ſhut one Eye, but there can be none at any time for to extinguiſh it.

Meditation X.

Upon Building after Fires.

IT is the ſaying of *Florus* the Hiſtorian concerning that fatal Fire of *Corinth*, in which all its Edifices were conſumed into Aſhes, and its Statues of Braſs, Silver, and Gold melted into one common Maſs: *Æris notam pretioſiorem fecit ipſa opulentiſſimæ urbis Injuria*; That the Vaſtation of that wealthy City was an occaſion to make the Mettal of it to be highly eſteemed in after Ages. The like may be ſaid concerning many Buildings, That the Flames which have turned them into deſolate ruines, have occaſioned a following beauty and ſtateline ſs in the ſecond Fabricks, far above what the firſt ever had. How oft have we ſeen

ſeen by ſuch accidents the dimenſions of Buildings inlarged, the Forms and Models of them much bettered, the whole with much more Art and Coſt Enriched, ſo as to fill the beholders with delight and wonder? Can man thus improve diſadvantages, and make Burnings and indigeſted heaps to ſerve as a Foil to his Art and Skill? can he effect a kind of Reſurrection, and New-Birth to what was once deſtroyed? What then can God do, whoſe power is perfected in weakneſs, and, like the Sun, ſhines brighteſt when environed with the blackeſt Clouds of difficulties? Surely he can, yea, and undoubtedly will give a being to the Bodies of his Martyrs, which the Fire hath conſumed into Aſhes, and the Wind hath ſcattered into diſtances. He will awake his Saints, who have made (for Ages) their Beds in the Grave, and have filled their Mouths with the Gravel and Slime of the Pit: He will call for his redeemed ones from out of the deep Sea, and from the Maws of Fiſhes that have devoured them, and give to every one of them, not onely the ſame *Specifical*, but the ſame *Numerical* Body, changed in its *Properties*, but not in its *Eſſence*, Clarified with Angelical Perfections, but not

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Tranſubſtantiated from a Corporeal to a Spiritual ſubſtance: Is not all this done already in Chriſt? our Nature in his Body is *Spiritualized*; to tell us, that for poſſibility it may be, and for certainty it ſhall be ſo in us. He is our *Brother*, therefore we may be like him; and he is our *Head*, therefore we muſt be like him in a Conformity to his glorious Body. Why therefore ſhould I fear the greateſt Enemies of Life, the *Fire*, the *Grave*, or the *Sea?* Is there any thing too hard for God? is not his Power and his Promiſe ingaged to do that for me which he hath done for my Saviour? hath he not ſaid, that thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus he will bring with him? Lord help me to make it my onely care to have my life Holy, that my Reſurrection may be Happy; to live to Chriſt, that I may live with Chriſt; and from a *Netherlander* in the duſt below, may be made a *Citizen* of the new *Jeruſalem* which is above, and rejoyce in the joy of thy People, and glory with thine Inheritance.

Meditation XI.

Upon the Torrid Zone.

WHen I think, or read what ſtrange Deſcriptions the Ancients have made of the *Middle* or *Burning Zone*, which in regard of its exceſſive Ardours, they Judged altogether inhabitable; and how much experience hath evinced their ignorance, in aſſerting the healthful, temperate, and pleaſant Dwellings that are to be found there: I cannot but Parallel them with the miſ-reports that Carnal Men, through blindneſs of Mind, or Pravity of Heart have taken up, and ſpread abroad of the wayes of Religion and Holineſs, rendering them to the World leſs tolerable than the Scorchings of the moſt *Torrid Zone*, and more dreadful than a Howling *Deſart*. Such which require Auſterity, and admit no Latitude; ſuch which by continual Conflicts make Watery Cheeks, and bleeding Hearts, and what not; which may ſerve as a Flaming Sword to deterr any from entering upon the Confines of an Holy Life. But, is it not matter of Wonder; that Experience which

which puts an end to all Contradictions that can riſe up againſt it, and ſtops the Mouths of Gainſayers, ſhould not ſilence thoſe unjuſt Calumnies that have been long caſt upon Religion by ſuch Men who ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they know not? Can there be any thing more unreaſonably charged upon it than that which is contrary to the experience of Believers? *Honey* may as well ceaſe to be Sweet, becauſe the Sick Man ſaith it is Bitter, as the Paths of Holineſs to be Pleaſant, becauſe Carnal Men affirm them to be irkſome and difficult: and the Sun may as well be accuſed of Darkneſs, becauſe Dim and Purblind Eyes can ſee little or nothing of the light of it. Let them be asked, who have Sequeſtred themſelves from the Vanities of the World that they might enjoy God and themſelves the better, Whether they have wanted that ſatisfaction which they expected? or have miſſed what they have left? or have cauſe to complain of what they endure? And they will tell ſuch Queſtioniſts that, They have not left their Delights, but *exchanged* them; that Religion is *Joyful*, though not *Diſſolute*; that it hath its *Songs*, though not its *Frolicks*; that a good Conſcience can *Feaſt* it alwayes, though it cannot *Revel* it;

it; that Gods ſervice is *Free*, though not *Lawleſs*; that they can do what is *Decent*. *Expedient*, or *Lawful*, though not what is *Sinful*. How vain then are the Cavils, with which Worldlings, like malicious *Elimaſſes* pervert the ſtrait wayes of God? And, how cauſeleſs are the Scorns which they pour forth upon thoſe that walk in them? will they not at length (like the Drivel of thoſe that ſpit againſt the Wind) return upon their own Faces? or like Arrows ſhot up againſt the Sun, fall upon thoſe that undertake ſuch vain attempts? Lord, though many will not believe what others have ſeen and teſtifie, yet let not me ever diſavow, what thou haſt been pleaſed to let me ſee and know: But, let me alwayes confidently ſay with *David*, *I have ſeen an end of all Perfection, but thy Commandements are exceeding broad.*

Meditation

Meditation XII.

Upon ſtrength and length in Prayer.

WHen *Cicero* was asked, which of *Demoſthenes* his Orations he thought *beſt*, he wittily replyed, the *longeſt*. But, if the queſtion ſhould be, which of Prayers are the beſt, the anſwer then muſt not be, the *longeſt*, but the *ſtrongeſt*: not the Prayer that *exceeds* in *quantity*, but that which *excels* in *quality*. In Moral actions, the Manner of working is a ſwaying Circumſtance; a Man may ſin in doing good, but not in doing well: how few then are there which manage this duty of holy Prayer aright? Some miſtake the Language of Prayer, and think it conſiſts of nothing elſe than the cloathing of their meaning in apt expreſſions, with a tuneable delivery of it: Others preſume, that if neceſſity have put an edge upon their Requeſts, and ſtirred up ſome paſſions of Self-love, that they cannot fail of acceptance. Others again put much in the lengh of their Prayers, meaſuring them by the *time* which is ſpent, rather than by

by the *intention* which is exerciſed in them. But alaſs, how wide are all ſuch apprehenſions from the truth? and how fruitleſs will ſuch duties be to thoſe that are no otherwiſe buſied in them? the Prayer, which is as delightful Muſick in God's Ears, is not that which hath the quaint note of the *Nightingale*, but that which hath the mournful Tones of the *Dove*. Broken ſighs and groans are the beſt Eloquence with God, and become Prayer; as unexpected *ſtops* and *reſts* (made by Muſicians) do grace the Muſick with a kind of Harmonical *Apoſiopeſis*, or *Eclipſis*; it is not the Prayer that *Indigency* and natural *deſires* do ſharpen, but which the *Spirit* doth enliven, that is prevalent with God. The one is as the *cry* of the young *Ravens*, and the other is as the *voice* of *Children* that are taught to cry *Abba*, Father. It is not the many words of a proud *Phariſee* that obtains the bleſſing, but the pithy and ſhort Confeſſion of a penitent *Publican*, who is ſent away juſtified. *Ah Father!* may ſometimes be more effectual with God, who ſearcheth the hearts, and knoweth the minde of the Spirit, than a prayer that is ſtretched forth like an Evening ſhadow to a wonderful length. The one, though it be ſhort,

may, like a ſmall *figure* in a Number, ſtand for much: and the other, though great, like a volume of *Cyphers*, may ſignifie nothing. Let therefore ſuch who are frequent in the duty of prayer, eſpecially *young Converts*, who are apt to think above what is meet of their own enlargements, endeavour to turn their *length* into *ſtrength*, and to remember that there is a wide difference between the *gift* and *grace* of prayer, and that it is one thing to have *Commerce* with God in duties, and another to have *Communion* with him; The one is ſuch which ſtrangers may have in their mutual traffick, but the other is proper to friends, who are knit together in love.

Meditation XIII

Upon the Morning Dew.

THe Meditation of this Subject is no leſs facile than delightful, like *Jacobs* Veniſon, it is ſoon come by, becauſe God hath brought it to my hand, having often in his Word reſembled the *Dew* (which makes the earth fruitful) *to his Grace*, that makes the hearts of men, naturally

naturally barren, to bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs; ſo that it is no difficult task for to draw an uſeful parallel between the one and the other in ſundry reſpects.

The Dew is of an *heavenly original*, the nativity thereof is from the womb of the Morning, it tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the Sons of men. And is it not thus in the grace of Converſion? Is not that wholly from above, without any Preparations, Congruities, Concurrencies, that do or can ariſe from the fleſh? We are made *active* by grace, but we are not at all *Agents* in fitting our ſelves for Grace. As no man can be antecedently active to his *firſt* birth; ſo neither can he be to his *ſecond* birth: Of Gods own Will we are begotten by the Word of Truth.

The Dew alſo in its deſcent and fall is ſilent and imperceptible, it flies, every ſenſe of which it may ſeem to be a proper object. It is ſo ſubtle, as that the ſharpeſt eye cannot ſee it; ſo ſilent, as that the quickeſt ear cannot hear it; and ſo thin, as that the naked hand cannot feel it. When it is come, it is viſible, but how it comes, who can tell? After ſuch a ſecret manner oft times are the illapſes of the Spirit, and the operations of his grace upon the heart; his *Teachings*, his *Tractions*, his *Callings* are

all efficacious to *draw*, to *perſwade*; yet the way is hidden, and the ſoul, ere ever it is aware, is made like the Chariots of *Aminadab*.

The Dew again, as *Naturaliſts* obſerve, is moſt abounding in calm and ſerene ſeaſons, when the Heavens are leaſt diſturbed with winds and ſtorms; *Ros eſt humidum quid, è ſerenitate concretum minutatim labens*; It is a moyſture drawn up by the Sun in the day, and then falling by ſmall innumerable drops in the night. And is it not thus in the grace of God? Are not thoſe hearts refreſhed moſt with it, that are leaſt diſquieted with Earthly Cares, and toſſed to and fro with Anxieties? Are not ſuch, like *Gideons* Fleece, plentifully wet with the Evidences of Gods love, when others, like the ground about it, are wholly dry?

Laſtly, The Dew is of a growing and reviving nature, which brings a life and verdure to Fields, Vineyards, Gardens, Flowers, which the cold would chill, or the heat would ſcorch. Therefore when God promiſed to *Iſrael* the beauty of the *Lilly*, the ſtability of the *Cedar*, the fruitfulneſs of the *Olive*; to effect all, this he ſaith, *He will be as the Dew.* And what ground can but bring forth, when he who is the Father of the Rain, and begetteth

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the drops of the dew, ſhall himſelf deſcend upon it in bounty and goodneſs? Who can but love him with a love of *duty*, whom he ſhall thus tender with a love of *mercy*? Who can but love him with a love of *Concupiſcence*, as being more deſirous of new *Influences*, than ſatisfied with former *Receipts*, whom he ſo freely loves with a love of *Beneficence*? O Lord, my Soul thirſteth for thee as the gaping and chapped earth doth for the moyſture of the Heavens. I am nothing, I can do nothing without thee; my *fruitfulneſs*, my *growth*, my *life* depend wholly upon the droppings of thy grace; when thy dew lieth all night upon my Branch, my glory is freſh in me, and my whole man is as the ſmell of a field which the Lord hath bleſſed. Be not therefore unto me, O my God, as a Cloud without Rain, leſt I be as a Tree without fruit. But let thy grace alwaies diſtil upon me as the dew, and as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb; and then ſhall I be as the ground, which drinketh in the ſhowers that come oft upon it, and bringeth forth fruit mete for him by whom it is dreſſed, and receives alſo new bleſſing from God.

Meditation XIV.

Upon a Pearl in the Eye.

WHat ſpecious names have Phyſicians put upon diſeaſes, who call a *Plague-Sore* a *Carbuncle*, and the *white film*, which taketh away the *delightful ſight*, a *Pearl in the Eye?* Do they gild over Diſeaſes, as they do their *Pills*, or a *Bolus*, that ſo their Patients may leſs fear and feel the evil of the one, as they leſs taſte the bitterneſs of the other? And are any by ſuch ſlender Artifices brought into an opinion that a *Carbuncle* is leſs mortal or loathſome than any other ſwelling that hath not ſo gay a name? Or that blindneſs which is cauſed by a *Pearl in the Eye*, is more comfortable than the loſs of ſight that comes by other accidents? Methinks Reaſon ſhould not run at ſo low an ebb in any, as to pleaſe themſelves in ſuch fancies; may not a *Poyſon* have a *name* that ſounds better to the ear; a *colour* more pleaſing to the eye; and a taſt that is more grateful to the Pallate, than the *Antidote* which expels it? May not *Alchymy* gliſter when *Gold* looks pale? And

And yet alas! in ſpiritual maladies, in which the danger is ſo much the greater by how much the ſoul is of more value than the body. With what ſtrange deluſion are many tranſported? who when their minds are poyſoned with Error and Blaſphemy, do then put upon their corrupt Opinions and Tenents, the glorious names of *Revelations*, *Viſions*, *Raptures*, *Refined notions*, and what not, that may confirm themſelves in their own dotages, and win others into an admiration of their perſons. Thus *Montanus* gave out himſelf to be the *Comforter* that Chriſt had promiſed to ſend forth into the World. *Arius* proudly boaſted, that God had revealed ſomething to him, which he hid from his Apoſtles. And *Eunomius* fondly imagined, that he was taken up to Heaven, as *Elias* was; and had ſeen Gods face, as had *Moſes*, and was wrapt up to the third heaven, as was *Paul*. But what other thing are theſe Follies, or rather Phrenſies, than as if an *Iſraelite* infected with the botch of *Egypt*, and overſpread with it from the ſole of the foot to the crown of the head, ſhould boaſt that he had robbed the *Egyptians* of their moſt pretious Jewels, and had decked himſelf with them? Would not men pitty his diſtemper, rather than believe his confi-

dence? Would not they offer medicines to heal him, rather than ſuffer him to periſh under his miſerable deluſion of poſſeſſing great riches? How is it then that in matters of Faith, in which there is both clear evidence and certainty, Hereticks, that are no other than ulcerous perſons, fitter for Dogs to lick than Chriſtians to love, ſhould throughout all Ages ſo eaſily gain to themſelves ſuch a great multitude of Proſelytes, only by putting fair names on ſoul Errors? It is becauſe men for their luſts ſake will not ſee, but willingly corrupt themſelves in thoſe things which they know? or, is it becauſe God hath ſmitten them with a ſpirit of blindneſs that they ſhall not ſee, for their not receiving of the truth in the love of it? Surely, what ever the cauſe be, ſuch is the infatuation, as that I had need both to *tremble*, and to *pray*: To *tremble*, at the ſad woe which is denounced by God himſelf againſt thoſe that *call evil good, and good evil: that put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter*. And to *pray*, as David did, *Teach me thy way O Lord, I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name.*

Meditation XV.

Upon ſpiritual and bodily ſickneſs.

THe Soul hath its maladies, as well as the body; and ſuch that for their likeneſs to them, do often borrow their names from them. *Pride* is a *Tympany*; *Avarice*, a *Dropſie*; *Security*, a *Lethargy*; *Luſt*, a *Calenture*; *Apoſtacy*, an *Epilepſie*. And yet (though theſe names of *bodily* diſeaſes do happily ſerve to point and ſhadow out the nature of *ſpiritual*) how wide is the difference between the Patients of the one and of the other, in regard of thoſe qualities which may diſpoſe them for a cure and recovery out of them? In the diſeaſes of the body, it matters not whether the Patient know the name of his diſeaſe, or underſtand the vertue of the medicines which are preſcribed, or be able to judge of the *increaſe*, *height*, and *declination*, of his diſtempers by the beatings of his pulſe; the whole buſineſs is managed by the care and wiſdom of the Phyſitian, who oft times conceals the danger

ger on purpoſe leſt *fear* and *fancy* ſhould work more than his Phyſick, and hinder the benfiet of what he applies. But in the maladies of the Soul, it is far otherwiſe; the firſt ſtep unto ſpiritual health, is a diſtinct and clear inſight of ſin, ſuch which makes men to underſtand the Plague of their own hearts. Chriſt heals by *light*, as well as by *Influence*; he firſt *Convinceth* them of ſin, and then gives the *pardon*; he diſcovers the *diſeaſe* to them, and then adminiſters the *medicine*. Ignorance is a bar to the welfare of the ſoul, though not of the body, and makes the divine remedies to have as little effect upon it, as Purges or Cordials have upon the Glaſſes into which they are put. It is *Solomons* peremptory Concluſion, that a ſoul without knowledg is not good, nor indeed can be, becauſe it wants a principle, which is as neceſſary to goodneſs, as a viſive power to the eye to enable it to diſcern its object. How can he ever value holineſs who underſtands not what ſin is? or deſire a Saviour who hath no ſenſe of his need? O therefore, bleſſed Lord, do thou daily more open my eyes, that I may ſee my ſelf to be among the *ſinners*, and not among the *righteous*; among the *ſick* and not among the *whole*; that ſo I may be healed by

by thee, who cameſt not to *call* the righteous, but ſinners to repentance; nor to *ſave* the whole but the ſick. Be thou my *Phyſitian*, and let me be thy *Patient*, until thou makeſt me to ſay, I am not ſick, becauſe thou haſt forgiven me all mine iniquities.

Meditation XVI.

Upon a Lamp and a Star.

Such is the diſparity between a *Lamp* and a *Star*, as that haply it may not a little be wondered at, why I ſhould make a joynt Meditation of them which are ſo greatly diſtant in reſpect of *place*, and far more in reſpect of *quality*; the one being an *earthly*, and the other an *heavenly* body. What is a *Lamp* to a *Star* in regard of *influence*, *duration*; or *beauty*? Hath it any quickning raies flowing from it? Or is its light immortal, ſo as not to become deſpiſed by expiring? can it dazle the beholder with its ſerene luſtre, and leave ſuch impreſſions of it ſelf upon the eye, as may render it for a time blind to any other objects? Alas! theſe are too high and noble effects

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for ſuch a feeble and uncertain light to produce, and proper only to thoſe glorious bodies that ſhine in the Firmament. But yet this great inequality between the one and the other, ſerves to make them both meet Emblems of the differing eſtate of Believers in this and the other life: who in Scripture, while they are on this ſide Heaven, are compared to wiſe Virgins with *Lamps burning*; and when they come to Heaven, to *Stars ſhining* which endure for ever and ever. Grace in the beſt of Saints is not perfect; but muſt, like a Lamp, be fed with new ſupplies that it go not out, and be often *trimmed* that it be not dim. Ordinances are as neceſſary to Chriſtians in this life as *Manna* to the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs, though in *Canaan* it ceaſed; And therefore, God hath appointed his Word and Sacraments to drop continually upon the hearts of his Children, as the two Olive trees upon the golden Candleſtick. What mean then thoſe fond conceits of *Perfectiſts*, who dream of living above all ſubſidiary helps, and judge Ordinances as uſeleſs to them, as oyl for a Star, or a ſnuffing to the Sun to make it ſhine more bright? It is true, when we come to heaven, ſuch things will be of no more uſe to our ſouls, than meat or drink will be

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to our bodies; but yet while we are on the Earth, the body cannot live without the one, nor the ſoul without the other. Do thou therefore, holy God, preſerve in me a due ſenſe of my impotency and wants, whoſe light is *fading*, as well as *borrowed*, that ſo I may daily ſuck ſupplies from thee, and acknowledg that I live not only by grace *received*, but by grace *renewed*, and while I am in this life, have light only as a *Lamp* in the *Temple*, which muſt be fed and trimmed, and not as a *Star* in *Heaven*.

Meditation XVII.

Upon a Chancery Bill.

ONe cauſe and original can have but one orderly and genuine birth; elſe what means our *Saviours* queſtion, *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* Or that of St. *James*, *doth a fountain at the ſame place ſend forth water ſweet and bitter?* May it not then juſtly be the opinion and mind of many, that the leaſt fruit of any holy Meditation can never grow from ſuch a *bramble* of Contention as a *Chancery*

Bill

Bill? And that from such a spring of *Marah*, a sweet and delightful stream can never issue? Yea, who will not be ready to take up *Nathaniels* question *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* And then what better answer can I return to such than *Philips*, *Come and see?* And now let me say what I have often thought, That between such a *Bill* and most mens *Confessions* of sin in prayer, in which they implead themselves to God, there is too great a likeness in this respect, that the complaints in both have more of *course* and *form* than *truth* and *reality*. In the one, it is *Mos Curiæ*, the usage and custome of the Court for the *Plaintiff* to pretend *Fraud*, *Rapines*, *Combinations*, *Concealments*, done and made to the prejudice of his right, which yet he never intends to prove against the *Defendant*, but only to make use of as a ground of inquiry. And is it not thus also in the other? Are there not in Prayer large Catalogues and Enumerations of sin, which many charge themselves with before God, as if it were their great work to justifie God in their self condemnation? *Pride*, *Wantonnesse*, *Hypocrisie*, *Contumacy*, are the black, shall I say, or *Scarlet* sins, that are among others instanced in? And yet what other thing is intended by them, than to make

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up the outside of a Prayer? These sins are only placed in it, as dark shadows in a Picture, to set it off with more advantage, and to commend it rather to men than to God. In the doing of the duty, they think not in the least the worse of themselves for what they say against themselves, nor would have others so to do; else how comes it to pass, that in charging themselves so deeply at Gods Tribunal, there is as little appearance of shame or sorrow in their face, as there was of a Cloud in the Heavens, when *Elijahs* Servant returned this Answer, that there was nothing? Now though it be no part either of my work or purpose, to justifie or condemn the practices of humane Judicatories, which admit loose suggestions, that are as Arrows shot at randome, because that now and then they serve for a discovery: Yet I cannot but condemn and abhor that the confession of sin in prayer, should be as slight and overly, as the complaints of a *Chancery Bill*; and that particular sins specified in it, and aggravated with hainous Circumstances, should be no other than things of course, done rather to lengthen out the duty than affect the heart; to discover quickness of parts rather than truth of Grace. What is this but to make Pray-

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er it self, which should be as sweet Incense burning upon the Golden Altar, to be as an Offering of *Sulphur*, or *Assa-fœtida*? What is this but to mock God, the searcher of the heart, with vain words; and to publish to the World how little they fear his anger, or value his pardon? for if the Confession of Sin be formal, how can the seeking of forgiveness be real? O holy Lord, preserve me from such Hypocrisie, and remember not what in this kinde I have been guilty of: my desire is to judge my self, not in word, but in truth; and unfeignedly to beg, that I, who am in the court of thy justice wholly inexcusable, may in the *Chancery* of thy Mercy, become altogether *inaccusable*.

Meditation XVIII.

Upon the Philosophers stone.

THis *Lemma*, or Title, may happily as much affect such who make Gold their God, as the sight of the Star did the Wise Men, hoping that it will be both a *light* and *guide* to the discovery of that rare and matchless secret, of

of turning the more baſe and inferiour Metals into the more noble; *Iron* into *Silver*, and *Braſs* into *Gold*, and ſo Enrich them with an *Artificial Indies*. But I can ſcarce reſolve my ſelf whether the *Philoſophers Stone*, which is thus framed for wonders, be not rather a *Speculation* than an abſolute *reality*, or an *attempt* aſſayed by many, rather than an *Atchievment* attained by few or any: How many have melted down Ample Revenues in their Cruſibles, and while they have, with much labour, ſought the *Sublimation* of Metals, have ſunk themſelves into the deepeſt beggery? and how have others conſumed their time, if not waſted their Eſtates in afruitleſs purſuit of it? and yet have ſeen no other change than what *age* and *care* hath made in themſelves, by turning their *golden* hair into *ſilver* hair; or at the beſt have gleaned up ſome few Experiments only, which have not compenſated their Coſt and travel. But, what if any Man, after long ſearch and ſtudy, can *Archimedes*-like, cry out joyfully, that he hath found it? Yea, what if every Man, who hath buſied his thoughts, and imployed his time in diving into this Myſtery, ſhould be able to effect ſuch a Change, and to multiply his Treaſure as the Sand? yet how worthleſs and in-

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conſiderable would ſuch productions of his *philoſophical Stone* be found, if compared with the noble and tranſcendent effects of the *Divine*, or *Theological Stone*, which Chriſt promiſeth in the *Revelation* to him that overcometh: whoſe worth as it is far greater, ſo the way to obtain it is more facile and certain, it being not a *worke* of labour, but a *gift* of grace. This *Stone* is of ſuch power and energy, that whoſoever is poſſeſſed of it, can have nothing befal him, which it changeth and turneth not to his good: it turneth all temporal loſſes into ſpiritual advantages; all croſſes into bleſſings; all afflictions into comforts: it dignifies reproach and ignominy; it changeth the hardſhip of a Priſon into the delights of a Palace; it is an heavenly *Anodyne* againſt all pains, and makes the Soul to poſſeſs it ſelf in patience in every condition: It is a *Panacea*, an univerſal Salve for every Sore, to all accidents that can befal a Man; It is as the Seal to the Wax, putting upon them a new ſtamp and figure, and making them to be what they were not before, and what they never could have been without it. Such it is that he who hath it, hath all good: and he that wants it (what ever elſe he ſeems to poſſeſs) hath little

little leſs than nothing. Who then can without *mourning* as well as *wondring*, think of the prodigious folly of thoſe Men, who labor in a continual fire to effect the Stone of the Tranſmutation of Metals, and yet deem this Divine Stone ſcarce worth the begging of God in a Prayer? Is this wiſedom, to toyl in the refining of Clay, and to be able to make a dull piece of Earth to ſhine, and then to value our happiineſs by it? Is this wiſedom, to ſet a low rate upon what God hath promiſed to give, and highly to eſteem what we can do? O Lord, if this be the Worlds wiſedom, let me become a fool: I had rather have this Divine Stone of thy Promiſe, than all the Treaſures that Nature and Art can yield. Let the Mountains be turned into Gold, the Rocks into Diamonds, the Sands into Pearls, yet this Stone with the *New Name written in it*, is to me more deſirable than all, as being a ſure pledg of life and happineſs in heaven.

Meditation XIX.

Upon a Greek Accent.

ACcents are by the *Hebrews* aptly called *ſapores*, Taſts, or Savours, becauſe that Speech, or Words, without the obſervance of them, are like *Jobs* White of an Egg, without Salt, inſipid, and unpleaſant. In the Greek, they derive their name from the due tenour or tuning of words; and in that Tongue, words are not pronounced according to the long or ſhort *vowels*, but according to the *accent* ſet upon them, which directs the *riſe* or *fall*, the *length* or *brevity* of their pronuntiation. Now, what *accents* are in the *Greek* to words, that methinks *circumſtances* are to ſins, which, as ſo many *Moral accents*, do fitly ſerve to ſhew their juſt and certain dimenſions, and teach us aright to diſcern how great or ſmall they be: and he, that without reſpect had unto them, doth judge of the bigneſs of ſins, is like to erre as much as a man that ſhould take upon him, without *Mathematical* Inſtruments, to give exactly the greatneſs of the

the Heavenly Bodies, and to pronounce of *Altitudes*, *Diſtances*, *Aſpects*, and other Appearances, by the ſcantling of the *Eye*. Is not this the Scripture-way to ſet out Sin, by the *Place*, *Time*, *Continuance* in it, and repetitions of it? Doth not God thus accent *Iſraels* ſins by the *place* in which they were done? they provoked him at the *Red-Sea*, where they ſaw the mighty workes of his power, in making the deep to be their path to *Canaan*, and the *Ægyptians* Grave. They tempted him in the *Wilderneſs*, where their *Food*, *Drink*, *Clothes*, were all made up of Miracles; the Clouds yielding them Meat, the dry Rock Water, and their Garments not waxing old. Doth he not aggravate them, by the long ſpace of their continuance in them, in ſaying, that they grieved him forty years? doth he not number the times of their re-iterated Murmurings and Rebellions, and make it as a ground for his Juſtice to deſtroy them? Neceſſary therefore it is, that in the duty of Self-examination, and reviews of the Book of Conſcience, we do not onely read over the naked Facts which have been done by us, but that we look into thoſe *apices peccati*, little *dots* and *tittles*, which are ſet upon the heads of many ſins (the Circumſtances I mean

mean, with which they were committed) or elſe we ſhall never read that book aright, or learn to know what ſins are great, or what ſmall. The Fact and the Circumſtance are both noted in the *Journals* of Conſcience, though they be not haply equally legible; and he that is truly penitent will make it a chief part of his work to finde out one as well as the other as being the beſt means both to get the heart broken for ſin, and from ſin. What ſhame? what fear? what carefulneſs? what revenge will a ſerious ſight of the ſeveral aggravations that meet in the perpetration of a ſin move & ſtir up in the heart a ſinner? will he not ſay, what a beaſt am I to ſin thus againſt ſo clear light? to break ſo often my own vows, to defer ſo long my Repentance and riſing again? what revenge ſhall I now take of my ſelf, to witneſs mine Indignation? what carefulneſs ſhall I exerciſe to evidence the truth of my return? what diligence ſhall I uſe to redeem my loſt time, who have joyned the Morning of the Task, and the Evening of the day together? Theſe, and ſuch like thoughts, will ſin, when it is Read as it Written, and accented, in the Conſcience produce. But a general knowledge and ſight of it, without ſuch particularities

ticularities, will neither make nor leave any impressions but what are both slight and confused. Do thou therefore, holy God, teach me to understand the errors of my wayes aright, and by the light of of thy spirit make me to see that Circumstances in sins are not Motes, but Beams and greatly intend their guilt, if not their bulk; That so I may mourn for those sins which Carnal Men conceive to be but so many black nothings; and abhor my self for those Corruptions in which they indulge themselves.

Meditation XX.

Upon a debauched Minister.

IT is a Truth, though it hath been questioned by some, and denied by others, that the *Function* of a Minister is Formally executed by Gifts, which are not made effectual by his *Personal Sanctity*, but by the *grace* of God in the hearer. The one may move *Morally*, but it is the other which worketh *Efficaciously*; and for any to conceive otherwise is a smatch of *Donatism*, who made the validity of Ordinances wholly

wholly to depend upon the real goodness of those that Administred them; which opinion, if it were true, it must necessarily follow, that there must be an absolute knowledge in the People, of discerning unfeigned Grace in the heart of the Minister, from all pretended semblances and shows: or else what comfort can they have in the validity of his Acts, while this suspicion abides upon them; that is, if he be not really holy, all that he can do is no other than a Nullity. We must then distinguish between the *grace* of *gifts*, which God bestows for the *good* of the *Church*, and the *gift* of *grace*, which he gives for the *good* of the Soul of him who is partaker of it: By the one of these, a Man may become a Minister; but without the conjunction of both, he can never be a *good Minister*. Holiness then, as it is that which no man can be well without, so a Minister least of all; it being the great end of his Office to turn Men from sin to God, and to draw Men up from earth, yea, from the danger of Hell to Heaven: And should he not do what he Teacheth, and second his Doctrine with his example; he must needs sin against his Calling, which alwaies heigthneth the notoriety of the fact. No sins being so inexcusably sinful, as those that are committed against

against Mens Callings: For a *Steward* to be a Thief, for a *Physician* to be a *Murderer*, for an *Ambassador* trusted with the Affairs of his Prince to be a *Traitor*, are Crimes of greater Infamy in them than in another. How then can the impieties of a Minister but be above all others, by so much the worst, by how much his Calling is above all others the best? What then can be more prodigious, than for him, who should be God's Mouth to the People, to have his Tongue set on Fire of Hell, and not touched with a Coal from the Altar? or for him whom God hath honoured with that high imployment of winning Souls, to be an accursed Apollyon in undoing and destroying them by his nefarious and impure living: If he that shall break the least Commandment, and Teach Men so, shal be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, what then shall he be called who breaks the greatest Commandment, and Teacheth Men so? surely I scarce know what to call him, who hath of a *Minister* thus transformed himself into a Monster. He is not a *Star* in Christs *right hand*, but in the *Dragons Tail*, which drew many from Heaven and cast them down upon the Earth. He is amongst the Prophets, the *Simeon* rightly called *Niger*, not for his *Complexion*, but for his *Con-*

versation: he is in the House and Temple of God, not as the Priests which did bear the Ark, but as the Beasts which drew it and shook it. For, if the sins of any Man do loosen and endanger the Foundations of Christian Religion, it is the wickedness of Ministers, which makes many to question whether there be an *Heaven*, an *Hell*, or a *God*. And though it may possibly now and then fall out, that the Seed of Divine Truth, like Corn sown by a leprous hand, grow up into some fruit; yet how small is the good that is wrought by this Doctrine, to the great hurt that is done by the dissolute life of such a Minister? is it likely that he, who in the Pulpit pleads for honour to be given to Christs Person, obedience to be yielded to his Precepts, faith to be exercised in his Promises, and when he is out of it gainsaies all that he hath spoken in his sensual practises, should win many Disciples to Christ? will he be ever much hearkned unto, who decries Drunkenesse, Swearing, Wantonnesse, as the high-Rodes and Paths to destruction; and yet turns not his own feet from walking in them? will it not be said unto him, Physician heal thy self? or, thou Hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thy own eye, & then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy

Brothers

Brothers eye. But what ever the iſſue be, whether Men hearken, or not hearken, yet will the condition of ſuch a Miniſter be moſt ſad in the great Day: if he be inſtrumental in the ſaving of any, yet they ſhall be none of his Crown or Joy, nor in the leaſt extenuate his miſery, but aggravate it, in that he hath been only to them as a ſtanding Statue, to point out the way to heaven, not a living Companion to walk with them in it. How much then will it augment his pains and anguiſh, when the blood of many miſ-led and loſt Souls muſt fall upon his head, and he be condemned as the curſed Murderer of them? O that theſe few words might prick the hearts of ſuch, who have worn the *badge* of God, and yet done the Devils *work*, who have been his Servants by Office, and his Enemies by *Practice*, that they might timely think both of ſaving themſelves and others. However, bleſſed God, help me to do the *Office* of a Miniſter, and keep me from the puniſhment of a Miniſter. Pardon mine inabilities in thy Service, and deliver me from ſcandalous ſins. Enable me to bear Reproach for Chriſt, but let me never be a reproach to Chriſt, or his Goſpel.

Meditation XXI.

Upon the Golden Calf, and the Brazen Serpent.

THE Makers of these two Images were *Moses* and *Aaron*, such a pair of Brethren as History cannot parallel for Eminency, and whose Names out-shine greatly all others of the like alliance that have an honourable mention in the Book of God. Where are there two Brethren in that Sacred Chronicle, so renowned for sundry Miracles done by them? or so highly dignified by Titles given to them by the Spirit of God as they? *Moses* being stiled signally, the *Servant of God*; and *Aaron*, the *Saint of the Lord*: and yet how strangely differing are their two Images? They are unlike in the *Matter*; the one being of *Gold*, and the other of *Brass*? unlike in the *Figure*, the one a *Calf*, the other a *Serpent*: but most unlike in their *Effects*, the one *Killing*, and the other *Healing*. *Vitulus aureus occidit Serpens Æneus sanat*: The Golden Calf *that kills*, and the Brazen Serpent that *saves alive*. One would think that the same Fountain should as soon send forth

forth Salt Water and Freſh, as either of theſe to do any thing that ſhould terminate in ſuch contrary effects, by whoſe harmonious Conduct, *Iſrael* had been led as a Flock of Sheep through the Wilderneſs. But what if their Actions did Jarr? yet, who could readily conceive that *Aarons* Calf ſhould be as a deſtroying poyſon? or that *Moſes* his Serpent ſhould be as an effectual Antidote to ſave alive? did he not flee from his Rod when turned into a Serpent, as fearing to be hurt by it? And was not this Brazen Serpent, in ſhape and figure, like to thoſe fiery Serpents that had ſtung many *Iſraelites* to death? From whence then comes this ſtrange difference between the one and the other, is it not from hence? *Aaron's* Calf, though made of Gold, was without, yea, againſt a Command of God; but *Moſes* his Serpent, though of Braſs, was by his ſpecial Appointment. Let the *Inſtitutions* of God be never ſo mean and deſpicable to the eye of ſenſe, yet they ſhall obtain their deſigned end: and let the *Inventions* of Men be never ſo rich and coſtly, yet they will be found to be no other than hurtful vanities. Who is of ſo ſmall an inſight in the Myſtery of Idolatry and Superſtition, as not to obſerve, how they affect a Pomp and Splendour in their Religion, as

if when they had made it Gay, they had made it Good? and how greatly they deſpiſe the ſimplicity of that Worſhip, which is not clothed and decked with an external Grandure? But will a Clove in the Mouth cure the unſavory breathings of corrupt Lungs? or will the Lepers making of himſelf brave with the fineſt Garments, cauſe the Prieſt to pronounce him clean, when he comes to behold his Sore? then may ſuch arts and palliations of men, wedded to Idolatrous practiſes, vindicate the evil of their doings, and juſtifie them to be ſuch as God will not condemn. But as Religion is not a thing left to any mans choice, to pick out from that diverſity, with which the World abounds, what beſt pleaſeth himſelf; ſo neither are the wayes and *Mediums* of the Exerciſe of it, at all in his power. As God is the object of Worſhip, ſo the means by which he is honoured, and his ſervants benefited that uſe them, muſt be appointed by himſelf. His will, and not mans, muſt be the ſole and adæquate Rule. For all Ordinances do not work neceſſarily, as the Fire burns, or as the Sun enlightens the Air; nor do they work *Phyſically*, as having an inherent power to produce their effects; but they are operative, by way of Inſtitution, and receive their virtue

tue from God, who therefore appoints weak and insufficient things to the eye of Reason, that himself may be the more acknowledged in all. What could be more unlikely to heal the bitings of a fiery Serpent, than the looking up only to a Brazen Serpent? or to restore to the blind Man his sight, than the anointing of his eyes with Clay and Spittle? And yet these things God and Christ are pleased to make use of; not from *Indigency*, as if they could not work without means, but from *Wisdome* and *Counsel*, to shew, that they can work by any; Let no Man then fondly make it his Work, or count it his duty to honour God with his Inventions, though specious and beautiful in his own eyes; but let him value and prize Gods Institutions, though to outward appearance they be contemptible. The Blew-Bottles, and other Weeds in the Field are more gaudy and delightful to the Eye, than the Corn amongst which they grow; but yet the one are worthlesse, and the other is full of strength and nourishment.

Meditation XXII.

Upon the Circulation of the Blood.

THough it be no confeſſed Maxim, yet it is an opinion which many Phyſicians do confidently aſſert, that the Motion of the blood is Circular, and that the blood which is in the feet, hath a reflux back into the heart. But it is not for me, if there be a difference between thoſe who are of *the ſecrets of Nature*, to undertake the deciſion of it, leſt it be ſaid to me, as it was to *Moſes*, when he mediated between the two *Iſraelites* that ſtrove, *Quis te conſtituit Judicem?* Who made you a Judge over us? I ſhall therefore turn my thoughts from it, unto the *Circulation* which is in the *civil body* of Society, wherein the affections, habits, manners, as a kinde of ſpiritual blood, may be truly affirmed both to flow upward from the inferiour parts of it, to the ſuperiour; and to deſcend again from the ſuperiour parts of it, to the inferiour. But yet this diſproportion is to be obſerved, that the *Effluxes* both of good and evil which move down-

downwards, are more quick and operative, than those which ascend from below upwards. Great Persons by their manners and carriage, do sooner make impressions upon persons of a meaner rank, than they are able to reflect back upon them again. This *Moral Circulation* therefore may teach those who are as the noble and *Architectonical* parts of the civil body, full of power and influence, to be exact and circumspect in their converse and living, that others, upon whom their influences fall, may be drawn by them to a love of holiness, and not seduced to lusts and intemperancies by their example. If he who was rightly surnamed *Copronymus*, have a fancy to the smell of Horse-dung, as to besmear himself with it; all his Courtiers, in a servile compliance unto him, will qualifie themselves for his company, by using no other perfumes. Yea, if greater beastialities be used by other Princes, they are not likely to want followers. The whole Court will be soon, like *Jacobs* Cattel, spotted and speckled; as being apt to conceive, with some tincture of the Colours, which they see in those waters whereof they daily drink. It being an hard thing to be an *Obadiah* that fears God greatly in *Ahabs* Court, or a Saint in *Ne-*

roes Houſhold. But though evil in thoſe who are in *high places* be more *infectious*, and the good more powerful than it is in others; yet the vices of thoſe who are in a lower Station, have a tendency to corrupt the greateſt; as the head in the body natural, is oft diſtempered by the feet. And ſo the vertues that are in them, are alſo operative, to influence thoſe that are in dignity above them, to the making of themſelves evil, if not more good. The luſtre of St. *John*'s Sanctity, though cloathed with Camels hair, extorts reverence from *Herod* in his Robes; and *Pauls* excellent demeanour of himſelf at the Bar, well-nigh overcomes *Agrippa* upon the Bench, to be a Chriſtian. O how careful then ſhould every man be, who in what condition ſoever he ſtands, is a part of the body of humane ſociety, to *abhor evil, and to cleave to that which is good?* When the effects, both of the one and other, are not terminated in our ſelves, but do more or leſs benefit or hurt others, as well as our ſelves.

Meditation

Meditation XXIII.

Upon a Multiplying Glaſs.

WHat a vain and fictitious happineſs would that be, if a poor man, who had only a ſmall piece of money, ſhould by looking upon it through a multiplying Glaſs, pleaſe himſelf in believing that he is now ſecure from the fears of preſſing wants; his ſingle piece being ſuddenly minted into many pounds, with which he can readily furniſh himſelf with fuel to warm him, cloaths to cover him, and food to ſatisfie him? But alas! when he puts forth his hand to take a ſupply from what he beholds, he can feel nothing of what he ſees; and when the Glaſs is gone that preſented him with ſo much Treaſure, he can then ſee nothing but his firſt pittance, which alſo becomes the leſs deſirable becauſe of the diſappointment of his hopes. Upon what better foundation doth the felicity of the greateſt part of men ſtand, which is not fixed upon any true and ſpiritual good, as its proper *Baſis*, but upon the ſpecious ſemblances of a corrupt and mutable fancy?

What

What is it that rich men do not promiſe themſelves, who conceive riches to be a ſtrong Tower? They think they can laugh at Famine, and when others, like the poor *Egyptians*, whoſe Subſtance is exhauſted, ſell themſelves and their children for food, they can buy their bread at any rate. If Enemies riſe up againſt them, they queſtion not, but they can purchaſe a peace or a victory. If Sickneſs come, oh how can they pleaſe themſelves in thinking that their Purſe can command the Phyſitians skill, and the Drugſters ſhops. Elixars, Cordials, Magiſterial powders, they conceive beforehand will be preſcribed both as their dyet and Phyſick: And every avenue of the body, at which the diſeaſe or death may threaten to enter, ſhall be ſo fortified, as that both of them ſhall receive an eaſie and quick repulſe. Now what are all theſe repreſentations but the impoſtures of the glaſs of Fancy, which, like the colours in the Rainbow, have more of *ſhew* than of Entity. Doth not *Solomon* counſel men not to labour to be rich? And expoſtulate with them, *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?* Doth not our *Saviour* call them, deceitful riches? And *Paul*, uncertain Riches? What then can they contribute to the real happineſs of any man?

Sure-

Surely the tranſient ſparks that with much difficulty are forced from the flint, may as ſoon add light to the body of the Sun, as Riches can yield any ſolid comfort to the ſoul, or keep it from lying down in the bed of darkneſs and ſorrow. Away then from me ye flattering vanities and guilded nothings of the world, get you to the Bats, and to the Moles, and try what beauteous rayes you can dart into their eyes. I will hence no more behold you in the Glaſs of Fancy, but in the Glaſs of the Word, which diſcovers that ye are alwaies vanity and vexation; no objects of truſt in the times of ſtrait, or price of deliverance in the day of wrath. It is methinks obſervable that four times in Scripture this ſaying is repeated, *That Riches and Treaſures profit nothing in the day of wrath*; twice in the Book of *Proverbs*, and then again by two Prophets, *Ezekiel* and *Zephaniah*: Doubtleſs theſe holy men knew what an univerſal proneſs there is in the minds of moſt to exalt Riches above Righteouſneſs; and to think, that by them Heaven might be purchaſed, and the flames of Hell bribed. How elſe could ſuch words ever drop from the mouths of any, that they had made a Covenant with Death, and were at an agreement with Hell to paſs from them

them? But, Lord, keep me from imagining to ſave my ſoul by Merchandize; or of entituling my ſelf any other way to the Inheritance of Heaven, than by the Blood of Chriſt, who is my Life, my Riches, my Rejoycing, and ſure Confidence.

Meditation XXIV.

Upon Gravity and Levity.

THe *Stoick* Philoſophy was famous for *Paradoxes*, ſtrange Opinions, improbable, and beſide common conceit; for which it was much admired by ſome, and as greatly controlled, and taxed by others. Howbeit, not *Stoicism* only; but every Art, and courſe of life and learning, hath ſome *Paradoxes* or other, but Chriſtianity hath many more, which ſeem like nothing leſs than truth, and yet are as true as ſtrange. What can be more contrary to the Principles and *Maxims* of Philoſophers, than to hold that there is a regreſs from a total privation to an habit? It was that which the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks* derided in *Paul*, when he preached the Reſurrection from the dead;

and

and yet Chriſtians build all their happineſs and confidence upon it. What can ſeem to carry more of a contradiction in it than that ſaying of our Saviour, *he that will loſe his life, ſhall find it?* And yet it is a truth of that importance, that whoſoever follows not Chriſts counſel will certainly miſs of life. What will haply appear more novel and ſtrange, than that which I ſhall now add by inverting the common Axiom, *Levia tendunt deorſum, et gravia ſurſum*, Light things fall downwards, and heavy aſcends upward: The lighter they are the lower they ſink, and the heavier they are the higher they riſe; and yet this Riddle hath a truth in it. In Scripture the wicked that muſt fall as low as hell are reſembled to things of the greateſt *Levity* as well as vileneſs, *Duſt*, *Chaff*, *Smoke*, *Fume*, *Scum*; and the Saints that muſt aſcend as high as Heaven, are likned to things of weight as well as worth: To *Wheat*, the heavieſt of which is the beſt; to *Gold*, which is of Metals the weightieſt, as well as the richeſt; to *Gems* and pretious Stones that are valued by the number of *Carrats* which they weigh, as well as by their luſtre with which they ſparkle. Yea God hath his *Ballance* to weigh men and their actions, as well as his Touch-

ſtone

ſtone to try them. He is a God of knowledg, by whom actions are weighed, ſaith *Hannah* in her Song: And if he find great men a lye and vanity upon the Ballance he will not ſpare them. What a ſevere Judgement did God execute upon *Belſhazzar*, who being weighed and found wanting, was in the ſame night caſt out both from his kingdom, and from the Land of the living? And what a dreadful Sentence hath Chriſt foretold ſhall come from his mouth in the great day againſt thoſe who have made a vain and empty profeſſion of his Name, who are bid to depart from him, and go accurſed into everlaſting fire, not for doing evil againſt his, but for not doing of good unto them? A form of Godlineſs without the power will condemn, as well as real and open wickedneſs: To be found too light in Gods Scale may be a bar to Heaven, as well as the load of many ſins. O remember who hath ſaid it, Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the *Scribes and Phariſes*, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of heaven. How gladly then would I perſwade Chriſtians, that the beſt way to climb the *Jacobs Ladder*, which hath its foot on Earth, and its top in Glory, is to be fully laden with all fruits of holineſs.

Chriſti-

Christi sarcina pennas habet non pondus, The burden of Christ is not a pressing weight, but a winged thing which carries the soul upwards, and helps it to soar aloft towards God himself. None are crowned with greater glory, or set upon higher Thrones, than they who have their fruit unto true holiness above others.

Meditation XXV.

Upon false Mediums.

THe fruition of the End, is the Sabbath of all action, having this property in it, to *quiet*, as well as *incite* the *Agent*; for nothing moves that it may move, but moves that it may rest. And yet though the end be alwaies desirable, it is, by Agents who act freely, and out of choice often missed, and falls short of, as well as enjoyed. And this sometimes comes to passe, by their dividing the means from the end, presuming they may obtain the one, and yet not use the other. With this Sophism Satan hath cheated many of Salvation, while he hath made them confident of happiness, and yet careless of holiness; and to think they may Inn with the righteous.

ous, though they never travel with them in the way; that they may reap glory, though they ſow ſeed to the fleſh. Sometimes again they miſs the end, though they uſe the means, becauſe they do not proportion the one to the other. They uſe the means, but it is, as ſome Patients take Phyſick, to ſtir the humours, rather than to carry them away; and thereby endanger themſelves, rather than effect a cure. Many through the ſtrength of Conviction, yield, that if they will have heaven, ſomething muſt be done by them; but their ſtudy is rather to finde out the *inviſible point*, where nature and grace part, than to abound in all manner of holy Converſation; and ſo while they ſtrive to do no more than what will ſave them, they miſerably fall ſhort of what is requiſite. Others again miſcarry in regard of the end, by pitching upon falſe and vain means; ſuch when laboured and perſiſted in, do not profit in the leaſt. Would any man wonder at his diſappointment, that ſhould hunt an Hare with a Snail? or to hit the Mark ſhould ſhoot an Arrow out of a Butchers Grambrel? or to make a Tree fruitful, ſhould cloath the body of it with coſtly Silks, inſteed of feeding the root with good mould? Would not this folly be rather greatly reproached by all, than

his

his fruſtrated endeavours in the leaſt be pitied by any? And yet how many men, who would brand ſuch a perſon with the deepeſt mark of folly and madneſs, are as guilty of as great infatuation, in matters of far higher moment? Is there any thing that can be of more real conſequence, than the eternal welfare of an immortal Soul? Can the care of Anxiety be too great what Rocks to ſhun, what paths to tread, what means to uſe, that may bring the Soul and Salvation together? And yet behold what an ill choice of *Mediums*, do ſuch who profeſs themſelves wiſe, make to effect it! The *Idolater*, he after a ſtrange manner, firſt makes his God, and then begs his happineſſe from it; one part of the Wood he burns, as Fuel to ſerve him, and the other part of it, he ſerves and dreads as a Deity, and falling down unto it, worſhippeth it, and ſaith, *Deliver me, for thou art my God.* The wretched *Libertine* he thinks, it little skills what Religion any man is of, ſo he be but true unto it, and walk according to the Rules and Principles of it: as if Heaven were a Port to which all Winds would drive; an Inne, in which Travellers that journey from contrary quarters, may be equally received. The *Phariſaical Chriſtian*, laies the ſtreſs of his

his Salvation upon his Duties, which at best are like chains of Glass, more specious than strong; like flourishings in Parchment, that cannot bear a fiery tryal. O how few are they who consider that Heaven stands like a little Mark in a wide Field, where there are a thousand waies to erre from it, and but one to hit it? yea, though God hath said, that there is but *one Sacrifice* by which we can be Perfected; but *one Blood* by which we can be Purified; but *one Name* by which we can be Saved; yet how hardly are the best drawn to trust perfectly to the Grace revealed, and to look from themselves to Christ, as the Author and Finisher of their blessedness? To make then a right choice of the way that leads to Salvation, is not an Act of Natural Wisdome, but of Divine Illumination, and Teachings of the Spirit; who both inlightneth the Minde, and inclineth the will to chuse the one thing necessary. O therefore, holy Father, seeing thou hast made the whole Progress of Salvation, from first to last, to be in Christ, and by Christ; *Election* to be in him, *Adoption* to be in him, *Justification* to be in him, *Sanctification* to be in him, *Glorification* to be in him; grant, that whatever others do, I may never chuse the *Candle-light of Reason*, but the

Sun.

Sun of Righteouſneſs, as the guide of my feet, into the paths of life, and both in life and death ſay, as that bleſſed Martyr did, None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.

Meditation XXVI.

Upon the Royal Oak.

THe Perfections of God, his Soveraignty, Power, Wiſdome and Goodneſs, are ſeen as in a bright Mirrour, not only in the *ſtanding* works of *Creation*, but in the *tranſient* works of *Providence*, who doth, as *Job* acknowledgeth, *great things paſt finding out, and wonders without number.* But among the many ſignal Births of Providence, this which my thoughts are now upon, may juſtly challenge the right of the Firſt-born in a double portion, both of Meditation and Admiration: As then *Zacheus*, to ſee *Jeſus*, climbed up into a *Sycamore-Tree*, and thereby gained, not only a ſight of Chriſt, but a gracious look, and comfortable words from him: let us alſo climb this *Royal Oak*, that we may have an awful ſight of God, ſuch, as may not only fill us with wonder, but further us in *holineſs*,

neſs, which is the great end of Gods *Providences*, as well as of his *Ordinances*. And the firſt ſtep or motion that I ſhall make to aſcend this Oak by, is the conſideration of Gods Power, in uſing the ſame Creatures, not only in differing, but in *contrary* Services, as he is pleaſed ſeverally to apply them. The fire at the ſame time preſerves the three Children in the Furnace, and devours the Inſtruments of their Perſecution: The Red-Sea, is *Iſraels* Path to *Canaan*, and the Waters a Wall on each hand; but both are made the *Ægyptians grave*: The Earth opens her mouth to ſwallow up *Corah* and his Company; but it helps the *Woman* in her flight, by opening its mouth to drink in the Flood, which the Dragon ſent forth from his Mouth to deſtroy Her. The Trees of the Field fight for *David*, and contribute to his Victory more than his Army; for it is ſaid, that the Wood deſtroyed more than the Sword: An Oak Arreſts *Abſolom* in his flight, who is caught and hanged in it, as if it would point out, what was the juſt reward of his Treaſon and Rebellion againſt his King and Father; But an Oak ſuccours our *Prince* in his retreat from the ſtrength and power of a prevailing Enemy; and though it can tender no *Wreaths* or *Crowns* to him, yet it ſpreads forth its

Arms

Arms to receive him, and keeps him in ſo much ſafety, as to deliver good Men of their Fears, who were afflicted for his Jeopardy; and to diſappoint others of their hopes, who were Vainly Confident that he would be found, either among the number of the Slain, or of the Priſoners; But God was ſeen in the Mount, making his Eſcape, to be far more wonderful in every Mans eyes, than their Victory. Who then would not Adore and Fear ſuch a God, at whoſe Beck, *Fire*, *Water*, *Trees of the Field*, yea, and all Creatures become Enemies, or Friends, as he pleaſeth to make them?

A ſecond ſtep is the conſideration of Gods abſolute Soveraignty over all Potentates and Kings of the Earth; who, as *Elihu* expreſſeth it, *Breaketh in pieces the Mighty without number, and ſets others in their ſtead.* How full are the ſacred Chronicles of ſtrange Viciſſitudes and Changes which God hath made in the Crowns and Scepters of princes? *Sauls* Kingdom is taken from him and given to *David*; *Rehoboams* is rent in twain, and of twelve parts two only poſſeſſed by him: *Athalia* ſhe uſurps the Throne, and deſtroyes the Seed Royal: *Joaſh* is ſlain by a Conſpiracy: *Manaſſah* is bound in fetters: *Zedekiah* hath

hath Judgment given againſt him to take his farewel of the light, in beholding the ſlaying of his Sons, and then to have both his eyes put out. How eaſie were it to fill a Volume in this kind? but what need we ſearch further into Hiſtory, have we not ſeen as ſad Spectacles as we can any where read? Hath not Royal Blood been ſhed upon a Scaffold, to the ſhame and reproach of Religion? have we not ſeen Perſons of mean extractions, leaving their *Cottages*, and dwelling in Kings *Pallaces*, when Soveraignity hath been forced to take up the *lodging of a Crow?* Have we not ſeen that diſquieting Prodigie, of Servants upon Horſes, and Princes walking like Servants on foot? Now, to what end doth God thus ſhake the Mountains, and make the greateſt in Power to be as the Chaff of the Summer floores? is it not to ſtain the Pride of the Arm of Fleſh, and to let every one know that Power belongeth unto the Lord, and that it is better to truſt in the Lord, than to put confidence in Princes.

A third ſtep, or motion, diſcovers to us how eaſily God can hide Perſons and things from Man, when Man can neither hide Counſels from God, nor yet himſelf. *Adam* runs from God, and ſeeks ſhelter among

among the Trees of the Garden; but God findes him out: he ſows fig-leaves together to cover his Nakedneſs; but God eſpyes it. The Wings of the Morning can carry no Man to ſuch a diſtance, as that God ſhall not behold him; nor the pitchy darkneſs of the Night make ſuch a Covering, as he cannot look through, to whom the darkneſs and the light are both alike. The only way for a ſinner to hide himſelf from God, is to hide himſelf in God. But with what facilty and variety of wayes can God ſecure and keep thoſe whom Men deſign to deſtruction? *David* and ſix hundred Men are in the ſides of the ſame Cave into which *Saul* enters, and he perceives it not. *Joaſh* is hid ſix years in the Temple miraculouſly from the bloody Sword of *Athaliah*: and our *Sovereign* is no leſs wonderfully for ſome dayes preſerved in an Oak, as in a Sanctuary; though his Enemies made a moſt ſtrict ſearch for him, there being no Nation or Kingdom, under their Power, whither they did not ſend to ſeek him; and though they took not an Oath of them that they found him not, yet they proclaimed ample Rewards to any that would diſcover him. We read in *Judges* of an Angel that ſat under an *Oak*: and may we not well preſume,

that this *Oak*, which had a Prince in the top of it, had alſo an *Angel* at the bottom of it, if we well weigh the Eminency of the deliverance.

A fourth ſtep gives us to behold the rich Mercy, and the great Faithfulneſs of God, who though he doth afflict, yet doth not forſake; who as he caſts down, ſo he raiſeth up; as he taketh away, ſo alſo he graciouſly reſtored. Was ever Prince reduced to ſorer ſtraits? Did he not at once conflict with danger of Life, Poverty, Baniſhment, diſappointment of Counſels, and a daily ſetting back of his hopes by new difficulties and emergencies that did ariſe? and yet how wonderfully did God make theſe Mountains to become a Plain. The confuſed noyſe of Warriours in Battel, was not heard, Garments rolled in Blood were not ſeen; neither were the Firr-trees terribly ſhaken in the Field; all was effected, not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of God. The Temple, in which there was neither Hammer, nor Axe, nor any Tool of Iron heard, was not built in a more calm and ſtill manner than his Throne was Erected. And he who was as a Stone rejected for a long time, by certain Builders, at length became the Head-Stone of the Corner. May we not then

then well ſay, this is the Lords doing, it is marvellous in our eyes? Let me therefore make here a pauſe, and in ſtead of a further progreſs, ſay, as *Moſes* did, I will ſtand and ſee this great ſight, a Prince once diſguiſed in a poor and mean habit, and now cloathed with Robes of Majeſty; once an Exile from three Kingdoms, and now poſſeſſing the juſt Royalties of them all. Once neceſſitated to climb an *Oak* to preſerve his own life, and now daily aſcending the *Throne* to give out Laws of life and of death unto others. O what a web of wonders are here, of which God hath made garments of Praiſe and Salvation for him, whom many judged to be not onely ſmitten but forſaken of God? Admiration methinks now is better than words; and ſilence, in an aweful beholding of theſe things, is more expreſſive than a tree ſpeaking of them. I ſhall therefore break off this Meditation, which I cannot happily end, adding only this ſhort Prayer, That the good will of him that dwelt in the *Oak*, as well as in the *buſh*, may ſtill be ſeen in the bleſſings that come from him, upon the Head of our *Joſeph*, and on the Crown of the Head of Him that was ſeparated from his Subjects, but is now wonderfully reſtored to them.

Meditation XXVII.

Upon the Weapon Salve.

WHo was the Authour of this Weapon Salve, cannot certainly be affirmed: Some attribute it to *Paracelſus*, who was very pregnant in myſterious Inventions: others to one *Parmenſis Anſhelmus* an *Italian*, who was called a *Saint*, as *Simon Magus* of old, the great power of God, though both were no better than Sorcerers. But whoever he were, the Ointment is much famed (yet not altogether unqueſtioned) for its ſtrange manner of healing and curing of wounds, differing from other Phyſical Applications, in a double reſpect: The one is, that it is applyed, not to the perſon who receives the wounds, but to the Active Inſtrument that inflicts it, which is a ſubject not at all capable of ſickneſs or ſanity, of eaſe or pain, and ſo cannot be receptive of the alterative power of the Oyntment; which, if it work by a vertual contact, muſt neceſſarily have the intermedial Bodies to participate of it. The other is, that this Salve effects its Cure at diſtances, which are inconſiſtent with the

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Rules of a mediate Contact; it heals the Patient when he is a hundred miles off, as well as when he is near; and that requires a vicinity of place, as well as a right disposition of the *Medium*. Now these differences, though they have served to heighten its esteem in the apprehensions of many, and have given occasion to Learned Men, who are great admirers of *Sympathies*, to Write for it, or to be Fautors of it; yet others of no less worth and repute have divided from them, and have slighted it as an empty vanity, or censured it as a Magical impiety. For my part I am not satisfied with such subtil nicities as are used to defend it, of common and universal Spirits, which convey the action of the remedy unto the part, and conjoyn the vertue of bodies far disjoyned, neither can I think it worthy of such speculations; it commonly healing but simple wounds, and such, which being kept clean, need no other hand than that of Nature, and the Balsam of the proper part. But there is a Weapon Salve of which it is easie to speak much, but impossible to say enough; so full it is of divine and mysterious wonders, if we consider either what it is, or what the cures are which it effects, or what the distance is in which it operates. Would you

know what this *Salve* is? it is the Blood of Christ Crucified, whose sufferings do all turn to the advantage of Believers: the *Blood* is his, but the *Balm* is theirs; the *Thorns* are his, but the *Crown* is theirs; the *Price* is his, but the *Purchase* is theirs: Would you hear what Cures it doth? it healeth inveterate Ulcers, and mortal Wounds; it extinguisheth the Fiery Darts of Satan; it draws forth the Venome of the Sting of Death; it easeth Pressures, it destroyeth Yokes, and what not, that riseth up as a let or bar to a Believers life or happiness. Would you know the extent of its virtue, and at what a distance it operates? *Paul* tells us, that by the Blood of his Cross Christ hath reconciled all things unto himself, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven. There is no Person that can stand so remote, or be at any such Angle or Corner of the Earth, but he may partake of the influence of it, if he do but cast up an eye of Faith towards Heaven, and be as fully healed as any other. Like as the stung *Israelite*, who lay in the utmost part of the Camp, did receive equal benefit by looking to the Brazen Serpent, with him that stood next unto the Pole, upon which it was Erected. O therefore let not any, who are exercised with Spiritual Conflicts

Conflicts, cast away their confidence, but fight the good fight of Faith unto the end: for though they be not *invulnerable*, yet none of their Wounds are *incurable*. The Blood of Christ is more powerful to Save, than Sin, or other Enemies to destroy; else the great end of Christs Coming into the World, of being a Physician to the Sick, a Deliverer to the Captive, an Healer of the Broken-Hearted, would be in vain, and all the Saints must be still in their Sins. Set then Faith on work, ye that Faint and Droop in your Minds; and say not, who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring this Salve unto us that we may live? or who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring this Soveraign Balm of *Gilead* unto us, that we may be healed by it? Do but Believe, and the Cure is wrought. Faith is the Instrument which makes a vertual Contract between Christ and every Believer: It receives healing Grace from him, and straitwaies conveys it unto the Subject in which it is to terminate. For as Futurition in respect of Existency of things, is no prejudice to the Eye of Faith, in the beholding of them as present; So neither is distance of place, any hinderance to the efficacy of the touch of Faith, but that it may forthwith transmit the Sanative Efflux of Christs

Blood unto him, who by Faith toucheth him: The Woman that laboured many years of the Bloody Iſſue, in the ſame inſtant that She touched the Hem of Chriſts Garment, felt in her ſelf, that ſhe was healed of her Plague. But I am jealous, that whileſt I commend this ſacred remedy, ſome preſumptuous Sinner, who is more apt to abuſe Grace, than a Wounded Spirit to improve it, ſhould make no other uſe of it than to think, he may ſin ſecurely, and needs not fear what bruiſes and wounds he contracts, ſeeing the Cure is certain and ſpeedy. I can therefore do no leſs than expreſs my ſelf in an holy Indignation againſt ſuch, who would make the precious Blood of my Saviour ſubſervient to their luſts, deſiring rather to be freed from the *danger*, than from the *Dominion* of their ſins. *O my Soul, come not thou into their ſecret, unto their Aſſembly, mine Honour, be not thou united: Curſed be their luſts, for they are vile; and their deſires, for they are deviliſh.* Let me bleſs God, who hath made me whole, *and ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come unto me.*

Meditation

Meditation XXVIII.

Upon the Rudder of a Ship.

AMongſt other Similitudes, which St. *James* uſeth to ſhew that great matters are effected by ſmall means; this of the *Rudder* of a *Ship* is one: and he uſhereth it in with a *ſignal* word, which the Scripture often prefixeth to weighty ſayings, to render them the more remarkable: *Behold alſo the Ships, which though they be ſo great, are driven of fierce winds, yet are turned about with a very ſmall Helm whitherſoever the Governour liſteth.* The right guidance of this ſingle part is of ſuch conſequence to the ſafety of the whole, as that every irregular motion may either hazard the Veſſel, or greatly hinder its progreſs, when it anſwereth not the juſt point of the Compaſs. How continually are theſe words of direction, *Starboard*, *Starboard*, *Port*, *Port*, ſpoken by him that eyes the *Compaſs*, repeated by him that holds the *Helm*; to prevent all danger that might ariſe from miſtakes. Or elſe how ſuddenly would Rocks, Waves, or Sands make a prey of them? Well then might *Ariſtotle*

in his *Mechanical Queſtions* propoſe it as a Problem worthy of a reſolution, why a little helm hanging upon the outmoſt part of the Ship, ſhould have ſuch a great power as to move a vaſt Bulk and weight with much facility, amids ſtorms and guſts of wind? And may we not anſwer, that the wiſedom in theſe Arts is Gods, though the induſtry in the uſe of them is mans. But the more power it hath, the more apt Emblem it is of that faculty of the Will, which in all moral actions is the *Spiritual Rudder* of the ſoul, to turn the whole man this way or that way as it pleaſeth. The Poſition of the School is a truth, *Inclinatio voluntatis eſt inclinatio totius compoſiti*: The inclination of the will is the inclination of the whole Perſon; and according to the rectitude, or pravity of its motion both the man and his actions are denominated good or evil. And hence it is that *Auſtin* doth often denſie Sin by a *mala voluntas*, and Good by a *bona voluntas*, becauſue of the dominion which the will hath in the whole man. Of how abſolute concernment is it then, that this great Engine which commandeth all the inferiour powers of the ſoul, be not diſordered? If there be a *Dyſpepſie* in the Stomach, an *inflamation* in

in the Liver, or a taint in ſome other Vital, what can the leſs noble parts of the body contribute unto its health? If the Foundation be out of courſe, how can the Building ſtand? If the Spring be polluted, who can expect the Streams ſhould be Cryſtalline? If the will be vitiated, how can it be, that Fear, Hatred, Love, Joy, Deſire, which in the *ſenſitive* part are *paſſions*, but in the *ſoul* are immaterial *affections*, or rather operations of the Will, and are found in Angels themſelves, ſhould be pure and free from the corruption of their principle? It is therefore neceſſary that this *ſpiritual Rudder* have alſo a *ſpiritual Compaſs* by which it may ſteer, that ſo its motions may not be deſtructive, or at the leaſt vain. And what can this Compaſs be but the Word and Will of God? Conformity and obedience unto which, is the only happineſs as well as the whole duty of man. It is mans duty to will what God wills, becauſe as he was made like unto God in his Image, ſo he was made for God in his End. And it is the happineſs of man to *will* and *nill* as God doth, becauſe he thereby only comes to obtain a true and perfect reſt: Elſe, *Seu caret optatis, ſeu fruitio, miſer eſt*; whether he have or want what he deſires, he

he is ſtill miſerable; like *Noahs* Dove, reſtleſs and fluttering till it can find out an object wherein it may acquieſce; Like the Grave and Horſe-leech, alwaies craving and never ſatisfied. See then, O Chriſtian, from whence is it that this world, which is a tempeſtuous Sea unto all, proves ſo fatal to many in the ſad ſhipwrack of their eternall happineſs. Is it not from the lawleſs motions of their will? which when not governed by the will of God, as its perfect rule, is *Cupiditas non Voluntas*, an impetuous and raging *luſt* rather than a *will*. What was it that ruined our firſt Parents, and in them all their Poſterity, but the inordinacy of their will; by which they loſt both their happineſs and holineſs at once? And what is it under the Goſpel into which Chriſt reſolves the damnation of thoſe that periſh? Is it not that they will not come unto him that they might have life? All obedience or diſobedience is properly, or at leaſt primarily in no part but in the will, ſo that though other faculties of the ſoul in regeneration are ſanctified, and thereby made conformable to the will of God, yet obedience and diſobedience are formally acts of the will, and according to its qualifications is a man ſaid to be obedient

dient unto God or diſobedient. O that I could therefore awaken both my ſelf and others to a due conſideration of what importance it is, like a wiſe and induſtrious Pilot, to guide this *Rudder* of the ſoul the will of man, by the unerring Compaſs of the will of God. Heaven is the Port for which we all profeſs our ſelves bound, and can it ever be obtained by naked and inefficacious velleities, by a few faint wiſhings and wouldings? What blind *Balaam* would then miſs of it? What ſloathful man, that hideth his hand in his boſom, and will not ſo much as bring it to his mouth again, might not then poſſeſs it, as well as any *Caleb* or *Joſhuah*, that wholly followed the Lord; or as *David*, who fulfilled all his wills? Methinks that ſaying of our Saviour ſhould be as a Goad in the ſide of every ſluggard, *Not every one that ſaith unto me Lord, Lord ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* However, O holy God, let it quicken me to all diligence in an entire conformity of my will to thy will, that ſo I may readily do what thou commandeſt, and let me eſteem it as the beſt part of heavens happineſs, that I ſhall one day do it perfectly, as the Angels which behold thy face.

Meditation

Meditation XXIX.

Upon the Balſam Tree.

SOme faces are by the Painter drawn with leſs difficulty than others, the lineaments and features of them being ſuch as are more eaſie for his eye to obſerve and for his hand alſo happily to expreſs. And ſo it is with ſome Subjects of Meditation above others, which with leſs labour of the mind are by the Pencil of the thoughts formed into lively reſemblances of heavenly things, and thereby bearing a proportion to our ſenſes, do convey ſpiritual myſteries in a facile and delightful manner to our underſtanding. Such a ſubject is this *Balſam Tree*, which while I think of the *place* of its growth, the way of obtaining its *Juyce*, and the *ſoveraign vertue* that it hath to effect ſtrange cures, and to heal Inveterate diſeaſes; it carries forthwith my thoughts to my bleſſed Saviour, who is the onely repoſitory in which God hath laid up all his invaluable treaſures of healing Balſams. It readily ſuggeſts to me ſuch moving conſiderations as ſerve to exalt Chriſts

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Excellency in my heart, and to endear him to me in all the ties of choyſeſt affections; And that it may do ſo to others, I will draw the parallel between this Tree and Chriſt, that others may ſee what a ſweet repreſentation it is of him, who as *David* ſaith, forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diſeaſes. Firſt, the ſole place of this trees growth is in *Emanuels Land.* It is *Plinies* obſervation, *Balſamum uni terrarum Judææ conceſſum eſt*; it is a ſpecial grant beſtowed by God upon *Judea*: the Country which is renouned for Chriſts *Birth*, is alſo only celebrated for this Balm, all other Nations wholly wanted it, or at leaſt had none like it. *Moſes* tells us, that it was anciently one of the *Iſhmaelites* Commodities, which they carried from *Gilead* to *Egypt.* And *Ezekiel* ſaith, it was *Iſraels* and *Judahs* Marchandice to *Tyrus.* Doth it not then genuinely point out unto us, that the whole world muſt be beholding to Chriſt for Salvation and healing? Doth it not as a ſpiritual *Hieroglyphick*, aſſert that weighty Doctrine of *Peters*, *That there is no name under Heaven given amongſt men, whereby we muſt be ſaved, but by the Name of Chriſt?* Why then do men lay out their money for that which is not *Balm*? Why do they take hold ſometimes on one Creature,

ture, and ſometimes on another, ſaying, *Be thou our healer, let this ruine be under thy hand?* Is it not one of thoſe glorious Appellations, which God in Scripture is pleaſed to take unto himſelf, *Ego Jehovah curator tuus*, I am the Lord that healeth thee? Take heed then, O Chriſtian, when thou art under any diſtreſs, or under any malady, to cheat thy ſelf with falſe remedies, to uſe *Fig-leaves* inſtead of *Figs themſelves*. *Adam* took the one, which did only hide his nakedneſs, but not cure it; but to reſtore *Hezekiah*, God took the other. Uſe what God hath appointed, not what thou fancieſt.

Secondly, This *Balſam Tree* drops and weeps forth its Balm to heal their wounds, that cut and mangle it, and did not our bleſſed Saviour do thus? What a ſtrange requital did this *great*, *innocent*, and *holy* perſon make unto thoſe for whom he ſuffered? They mock and revile him hanging upon the Croſs, and he praies, and begs forgiveneſs for them. They ſhed his blood, and he makes it a precious Medicine to heal their putrid ſores. They ſmite and pierce him to the heart with a Spear, and he erects in his heart a fountain to waſh them from their ſin and uncleanneſs. Was it ever heard, that a Phyſician would ſweat

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and bleed for his ſurfeited Patient? Or that an offended Prince would expiate the foul Treaſons of his Subjects with his own life? Surely, well might the Apoſtle ſay, that *God commended his love towards us; in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* Be aſtoniſhed, O ye Angels of Heaven, who delight to pry into Goſpel Myſteries, at this Abyſs of divine love; from which *Seraphims* themſelves cannot but detract, if they ſhould in the leaſt conceive, that they could either fathom it with their knowledg, or expreſs it in their praiſes. And be ye melted, O rocky hearts of ſinners, with the ardency and ſtrength of ſuch love, which is ſtronger than death it ſelf. It was his love which held him upon the Groſs to finiſh your Salvation, when death could not hold him in the grave. Let this love of Chriſt conſtrain you henceforth not to live unto your ſelves, but unto him that died for you.

Thirdly, This *Balm* which diſtils from this wounded tree, is of ſuch vertue and efficacy, as that it is *Medicina omni morbo*; Phyſick to cure all diſeaſes, being applied inwardly or outwardly. It allayeth the *Head-ach*, it reſtores the Eye-ſight, helpeth the *Aſthma*, purgeth *Ulcers*, cureth the poyſonful *Sting* of Serpents, healeth all

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kind of wounds. Is not then this *Balm* in the *Letter* an apt Emblem of the Balm in the *myſtery* of the blood of Chriſt? which is of an unlimited power and excellency. What is the evil that can befal any, for which this is not a certain Cure? Oh when taken inwardly, as in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is both *Food* and *Phyſick*; it enlightens the dark mind, it heals the broken in heart, it fills the hungry with good things. When ſprinkled outwardly, as in Baptiſm, it is effectual to ſtop the Leproſie of Sin, to cure the venome and rage of Luſts, to mollifie the ſtony heart, and to make fruitful the Barren? Be then of good chear, O ye drooping and afflicted Souls, let me ſay to you, as *Paul* to thoſe in the tempeſt, *The lives of none of you ſhall be loſt.* If you complain, No ſins like yours; let me adde, There is no Salvation like Chriſts. If you ſay, you are a *Syſteme*, a fardle of ſins and luſts, hear what the Apoſtle ſaith, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.* No man ever miſcarried for being a *great* ſinner, but only for being an *impenitent* ſinner. Be not in love with your ſins, as Beggars are with their ſores; that will not part with them; and then doubt not of your Phyſicians *skill* or *care*. It is his peculiar glory, that never

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any Patient miſcarried under his hand, though ſuch was their condition, that they were all utterly incurable by any other.

Meditation XXX.

Upon the palpitation of the Heart.

THe *Pearl*, which in the Oyſter is a *diſeaſe*, in the Cabinet is a *Jewel* of rich value, and in the Ear an *Ornament* of an orient beauty: and ſuch a thing is this trembling or palpitation of the heart; in the body it is a ſad *malady*, in the ſoul it is an heavenly grace: They who are afflicted with the one, ſeek earneſtly to the Phyſician for a Cure: And they who want the other, importune God to obtain it from him as a bleſſing, when once they know the excellency and worth of it. Who is the Favourite of heaven, with whom the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, will dwell? And to whom will he look with an eye of Protection, with an eye of care and delight? Is it not

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to him that is of a contrite heart, and that trembleth at his Word? Who is the beſt Saint on Earth? Is it not he who uſeth moſt diligence to work out his Salvation with fear and trembling? All duties are beſt done, when accompanied with this holy trembling. Prayer and Confeſſion of ſins are never better made, than when we imitate thoſe Penitents in *Ezra*, who ſate trembling in the ſtreet of the houſe of God. The Word is never more awfully received, as the Will and Command of a Great King, than when received, as the Elders of *Bethlehem* did *Samuel*, who trembled at his coming. O methinks I cannot, without wonder, read how *Paul* lived among the *Corinthians*, in fear and much trembling, as ſenſible of the weight of his Miniſtry; and how they again received *Titus*, *Pauls* Meſſenger, with the like affection, not entertaining him with coſtly banquets, with Court-like Salutations, but with fear and trembling, which is the higheſt reſpect that can be ſhowen to the Doctrine of Chriſt. Yea, the Supper of the Lord it ſelf, though it be a Feaſt of Love, in which Chriſt, *qui eſt totus amor, eſt caput cœnæ*, who is all love, is the chief and only diſh, that a Soul hath to feed upon, is beſt Celebrated with a Divine trembling, which may

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correct our joy, and keep it from degenerating into a carnal mirth. The ſparkling raies of light which are reflected from the poliſhed Diamond, are much beautified by thoſe tremulous motions, which the eye beholds in the Stone: And ſo ſpiritual joy receives no little addition of luſtre and ſweetneſs by the mixtures of trembling that appear in it. How great then is the folly and wickedneſs of thoſe Sons of *Belial*, who ſcoff at the awful behaviour, which any exerciſe in the Services of God? as *Michael* did at *Davids* dancing before the Ark, as if it were nothing but Puſillanimity, which would beſeem Children better than Chriſtians, who ſtartle often at their own groundleſs Imaginations: But are the Angels Cowards, which tremble in the preſence of God? Is it any thing unbecoming them, who continually ſtand in his preſence, to expreſs a fear of him, as well as love unto him? How then can it be indecent for worthleſs Creatures to ſerve the great *Jehovah* with a holy awe and fear of his Majeſty? O God, I am conſcious unto my ſelf how little all my duties have been intervened with this divine grace. I have prayed before thee, but not trembled; I have received a Law from thy mouth, but I have not feared thee,

thee, the Great Law-giver, nor trembled at thy Commands. I have heard often of thee, by the hearing of the Ear, yet I have not abhorred my ſelf. And therefore I humbly beg of thee, that thou wouldeſt help me to ſanctifie thy name in my heart, and to make thee my fear, and my dread; that ſo I may neither abuſe thy Mercy, nor yet provoke thy Juſtice.

Meditation XXXI.

Upon the Shadow of a Man.

HOw abſolute, as well as general, is *Davids* aſſertion, *Surely every man walketh in a vain ſhew*, or *Image*, leading an imaginary, rather than a real life: Fleeing away as a *ſhadow*, rather than abiding as a *ſubſtance*. How ſhall I therefore fix a Meditation upon the ſhadow of a ſhadow? or hint ought that may be uſeful to any man, which grows only from ſo ſlender a principle as his own ſhadow? And yet if it be true which *Lorinus* ſaith, that the Art of Imagery, was *ex umbris nata*, firſt learned from a due obſervation of thoſe reſemblances, and proportions, which the ſha-

dow

dow bears unto the body; why may not ſome moral Conſiderations be ſuggeſted unto us from the different motions, oppoſite variations, ſudden vaniſhings, which every man may daily behold in his own ſhadow? Are not theſe genuine thoughts for a man to conceive, that it is with him, and with every Chriſtian, as it is with thoſe who walk with their faces towards the Sun, the dark ſhadow is quite behind them; but when they turn from the Sun, it forthwith changeth its place and comes before them. When they travel with their faces to the Sun of Righteouſneſs, their paths are full of light and comfort; but when they turn from him, what dark Images of death? what ghaſtly apparitions of hell and deſtruction do go before them, every ſtep they tread? Yea, the farther they wander from God, how their terrours encreaſe, and their fears multiply, which are ſtretched out like the ſhadows of the Evening, until at length they be ſwallowed up in the black darkneſs of the night? O that Apoſtates would think of this, who after they have ſet their faces towards Heaven, do again turn them towards Hell; who, after they have known the way of righteouſneſs, depart from the holy Commandment delivered unto them. Can your

hearts

hearts endure thoſe diſmal Spectrums, that you ſhall continually behold? Will you not, like the Hypocrites in *Zion*, at length cry out, *Who ſhall dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings?* O that the Children of light and of the day would conſider this, what great changes are made in their Eſtates and Comforts, by their averſions from God? Have they not cauſe to ſay and wiſh as *Job* did? *O that I were as in the daies when God preſerved me; when his Candle ſhined upon my head.* When his favour was like the Sun in the *Zenith*, which caſts its Beams ſo directly, as that it makes no ſhadow at all. Surely, they will find, that the ſhades of ſin are far more diſmal than the darkeſt nights of affliction; and that unleſs the light of Gods favour, which like the Sun on the Dyal of *Ahaz*, hath gone down many degrees, do return back again as many; they cannot, like *Ezekiah*, have any comfortable aſſurance that they ſhall live and not dye. O Lord, therefore hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footſteps be not moved, and let me always be rather as thoſe whoſe faces are towards *Zion*, though I go weeping; than as thoſe who turn the back upon thee, and conſider not that their ſteps go down to the Chambers of death.

Meditation

Meditation XXXII.

Upon the Moulting of a Peacock.

Such is the gayety of the *Peacocks* Plumes, that *Nazianzen* (as I find him cited) ſaith, that when he ſpreads his Starry Wheel, the *Pea-hen* is provoked to luſt; And the *Naturaliſts*, who deſcribe his properties, affirm, that he is ambitious of Praiſe, and affects to ſhew his Beauty, when commended by ſpectators; in a ſtately tread, and free diſplaying of his various colours againſt the Sun, which may caſt a luſtre upon them. But alaſs! How ſhort is the continuance of his glory? how ſmall is the diſtance between his delight to expoſe himſelf to the view of others, and his ſhame to be lookt upon by any? for no ſooner do thoſe ſpecious Feathers, in which he prided himſelf, fall from him, but he walks ſorrowfully, and hath then (as is obſerved) *latronis paſſum*, the ſhifting pace of a Thief, who flies the light, and the eye which beholds him: He is then dejected with the ſenſe of his

loſs, as one that is robbed by the Autumn of his Summers riches. Can we have now, though we ſhould make it our ſtudy, a more clear Comment upon that Text of St. Pauls, *The Faſhion, or Figure, of this World paſſeth away?* or a more apt Emblem of Worldly Mens behaviour when ſo it doth, than this penſive Bird affords unto us? What is the World, with which Men are ſo paſſionately inamoured, but a ſurface, an out-ſide, not ſo much a *beauty*, as a *luſt*, as St. *John* ſtiles it? And what are all thoſe tranſient Felicities of Honour, Fame, Riches, by which ſome are diſtinguiſhed from others, but ſo many Crowns of breath that have nothing of any firmneſs, or ſolid conſiſtency. What are they but ſo many painted bubbles which ſhine & break? O methinks I never wanted words till now, to expreſs their emptineſs! how ſhall I ſay ſomething, that may ſpeak them leſs than nothing? and yet in what admiration are theſe things had with moſt? How do men affect to have the eyes of others to behold them? and the mouths of others to applaud them? How highly do they who want any of theſe ſpecious vanities thirſt after them? and how hardly can any bear the loſs and privation of what this way they enjoy. And yet this is onely certain,

that

that all these things are most uncertain. The Sick mans Pulse is not more uneven in its beatings; the leaves of Trees more various in their falling; or the Feathers of Birds more facil in their moulting, than the Fancy and Pomp of all Earthly greatness is frail in its continuance. How many accidents do make a change where men do promise themselves the most firm stability? How soon is *Jobs* hedg pulled up, who said he should die in his nest, and multiply his dayes as the sand? And *Davids* Mountain removed, and he troubled, who pleased himself in its strength? What strange alteration doth the frowns of a Prince make in Courtiers glory? *Hamans* plumes of honour and riches which were lifted up and spread to the wonder of beholders, upon the change of *Ahasuerus* his Countenance, flag and trail in the dirt like the Peacocks train in a storm, yea drop and fall off; leaving him exposed to the utmost of shame and ignominy. What stedfastness had the rich Man in his great Possessions beyond his own conceit? he promised himself the Rest of many years, and yet lived not to see another morning. Death made *subitum pennarum depluvium*, an unexpected breach upon his designed projects; and while he

thinks to Impe his wings for an higher flight and mount, he falls as low as the grave. Can we then make a better, or more seasonable meditation, when we find our affections carried out to the prizing and seeking of such perishing vanities, than to expostulate thus with our selves? Why is my foolish heart eaten up with cares, mine eyes robbed of sleep, mine hands wearied with unceſſant labour, to grasp clowds, shaddows, trifles, that have little of reality or worth, and less of duration? Are these the things that make Angels happy? are the Robes and Crowns of Saints made of no other Matter than that we may see in the Courts of Princes? O what a poor place were Heaven, if it had no other riches, beauty, excellency, than what might be fetched out of the bowels of the Earth, or the bottom of the Seas and Rocks? Add but Eternity to such Common Comforts, and you turn them into burthens which cannot be born; into a satiety that produceth loathing, and not delight. It is a change onely that makes them to be grateful, it being sometimes as pleasing to want them as to have them; to lay them aside, as to put them on. Is it not then wisdom for me, for every one to make a right judgment con-

concerning true happineſs? and to know that it is one *thing*, and not many *things*; and yet it is ſufficient for all perſons, for all places both in Heaven and Earth; for all times both in this life and after it. It is ever the ſame, and maketh us ever the ſame; it hath no change in it ſelf, but the communication of its growth in us; and what is now Grace, ſhall be Glory in Heaven. If it could decay or looſe, it were not happineſs but miſery. Lord therefore, what ever others Judge or think, make me like the wiſe Merchant willing to ſell all to buy the Rich Pearl, yea to contemn all for the one thing neceſſary, and to ſay, as *David* did, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth, that I deſire beſide thee.*

Meditation XXXIII.

Upon a Pleaſure-Boat.

A Private houſe is often built by the ſame Model which Princes uſe for their Palaces, the dimenſions only being contracted, with the obſervance of the ſame Figure. And ſo a Boat, or a veſſel of Pleaſure

Pleaſure, differing in its uſe and deſign, as well as in its bulk from another Ship, is yet by the skill and Ingeny of the Artiſt, exactly made after the mould or ſhape of the talleſt Ship of War and Traffick; it having its *Riggings*, *Sails*, *Anchors*, *Cables*, *Falſe Ports*, and what not that pleaſe the fancy and eye of the beholder? but how many of theſe things are more for pomp and beauty, than for uſe and neceſſity? when the Veſſel it ſelf is made only to receive the caraſſes and blandiſhments of the Sea, and not to endure the hardſhip of a ſtorm. It is not an Ark for neceſſity, as *Moſes* his was, nor an Ark for ſafety, as *Noahs* was, but a Veſſel of Pleaſure; and therefore a gentle breath may ſwell the Sails; and the curling of the Waters that may cauſe a little agitation; and a ſerene Skie, which may invite the Fiſhes to ſport, do much heighten the delight of the Paſſengers; but loud Winds, Waves that roar, Clouds which mask the Heavens with darkneſs, carry in them ſo many Images of death, and ſoon turn their Pleaſure into affrightments, and put them upon nothing more than an earneſt longing and wiſhing for the ſafety of the Shore. But the reſolute Marriners in heir Ships, they both expect and prepare o wreſtle with ſuch difficulties; they ply

their

their Sails, they Fathom the Sea with their Line, they have their hand to the Helm, and their eye to Heaven; they let fall their Anchors, and ride amidst the Tempest till it hath spent its Fury, with an undaunted Courage. I have now methinks set forth in an *Allegory*, the *Temporary Professour*, and the *sound* and *real Believer*; the one having only the *form*, and the other the *power* of godliness; the one serving himself, and the other his God, in the Work of Religion. In the Sunshine and Prosperity of the Church, who spreads a fairer Sail of Profession than the *Temporary?* who seems more eager of following Christ, Coast after Coast, than he? who is more expressive of his joy and delight in his approaching to Ordinances? who more confident in his boastings, of following Christ, and dying with him, when others leave him, than he? And yet if but a Cloud of an hand-breadth arise in the Firmament of the Church, who is more full of boding fears and repentings in himself that ever he went so far? If Christ be but apprehended, and led away to the High Priests Pallace, to be there buffeted and spit upon, who more ready to say, *I know not the Man*; or, if it be needful, to renounce all with an Oath? Now the ground of all this is,

becauſe he makes his Religion an *Art*, rather than a *Duty*; and doth rather *inform* and actuate it, than is *informed* and guided by it. He took it up not to *honour* God, but to better himſelf by it; and therefore reſolves, if he cannot be a *gainer*, he will be no *loſer*. But how greatly differing from ſuch an one is the true and real Chriſtian? who enters into Religion, as into a Covenant of Marriage, which requires *Performances*, not *retractions*, and hath its *Præmeditata Commoda, & incommoda*, forethought-of Burdens, as well as Delights. He looks upon the Church of Chriſt, not as a *Pleaſure-Boat*, which is only for paſtime, but as a *Ship*, that muſt expect *ſtorms*, though not fear a *wrack*, becauſe Chriſt is in it. And therefore he is reſolved, with fortitude to withſt and the Corruptions of the Times, to out-face the ſins and ſcorns of Men; to be valiant for a Truth trampled upon; and not to be aſhamed of a Perſecuted Profeſſion; and to bear up againſt the threats and malice of the moſt Potent Enemies, with an unbended conſtancy. Did not *Peter* and *John* thus againſt a Synod of *Phariſies? Paul* againſt the Contradiction of the *Jews? Athanaſius* againſt the Power of *Conſtantius*, and the countenanced *Arians?* And *Chryſoſtom* againſt

gainſt the pride and rage of *Eudoxia*? He indeed is not worthy of Chriſt, who is allured only to come to him upon expectations of Pleaſure, nor he that is kept from him, for the fear of inſuing dangers. Do thou then, O bleſſed Saviour, make my heart upright in my coming unto thee, and fix my confidence ſo in thee, that the Seas of troubles may never ſeparate me in the leaſt from thee; and if at any time, like thy timerous Diſciples, I cry out, *Lord, ſave me I periſh*: do thou calm my *fears*, though not the *ſtorm*, that ſo I may poſſeſs my ſoul in patience, and believe, that thou wilt either be my *Pilot*, to bring me ſafe to ſhore, or my *Plank* to ſave me from ruine and periſhing.

Meditation XXXIV.

Upon the putting out of a Candle.

LIght and Darkneſſe, are in Scripture the two moſt uſual expreſſions, by which happineſs and miſery are ſet forth unto us. *Hell* and *Heaven* which will one day divide the whole World between them, and become the ſole Manſions of

endleſs woe, and bleſſedneſs, are deſcribed; the one to be a place of outward darkneſs, and the other an Inheritance in light. But it is obſervable alſo, that as the happineſs of worldly Men, and Believers is wholly differing; ſo the light to which the one and the other is reſembled, is greatly diſcrepant. The happineſs of the wicked worldling is compared unto a *Candle*, which is a feeble and dim light, and conſumes it ſelf by burning, or is put out by every ſmall puff of wind; but the proſperity and happineſs of the righteons, is not *lucerna in domo*, as a Candle in a houſe; but *ſol in Cœlo*, as the Sun in the Heaven, which though it may be clouded, or eclipſed, yet can never be extinguiſhed, or interrupted in its courſe, but that it will ſhine more and more unto the perfect day, till it come to the fulneſs of Bliſs and Glory in Heaven. May we not then rather bemoan, than envy the beſt condition of Worldly Men, who come out of a dark womb, into a dark world, and have no healing beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſing upon him to enlighten his paths, or to direct his ſteps. What if he have ſome few ſtrictures of light, which the Creatures, that are no better than a *ruſh Candle*, do ſeem to refreſh him with, and in the confidence of

which

which he walks for a time; yet alas! how ſuddenly do the damps of affliction make ſuch a light to burn blew, and to expire, and to leave him as loſt, in the pitchy ſhades of anguiſh and diſpair? How do the terrors of Darkneſſe multiply upon him every moment all thoſe evils that a reſtleſſe fancy can ſuggeſt? Hee ſees nothing, and yet he ſpeaks of ghaſtly ſhapes that ſtand before him: He cannot tell who hurts him, and yet he complains of the ſtinging of Serpents, of the torments of fiery flames, of the wracking of his limbs. If he have Cordials put into his mouth, he ſpits them out again, as if they were the gall of Aſps, or if he have food miniſtred unto him, he wholly rejects it, as that which will help to lengthen out a miſerable life; and yet die he dares not, leſt worſe things befall him If death approach, he then cries out, as *Criſorius* in *Gregory*, *Inducias vel uſque ad mane, inducias vel uſque ad mane*; a truce, a reſpit, Lord, until the Morning. So great are his ſtraits, as that he knows not what to chuſe, or what to fly then. O that I could affect ſome fond wordling, with the vanity and ſickleneſs of their condition, who have nothing to ſecure them from an endleſſe night of darkneſſe, but the wan and pale light of a few earthly comforts, which

are

are ofttimes far ſhorter than their lives, but never can be one moment longer. Have you no wiſdome to conſider, that your Life is but a ſpan, and that all your delights are not ſo much? Have you never read of a ſtate of Bleſſedneſſe, in which it is ſaid, that there ſhall be no night, and they need no Candle, *neither light of the Sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they ſhall reign for ever and ever?* or are you ſo regardleſſe of the future, as that you will reſolvedly hazard what ever can fall out, for the preſent ſatisfaction of ſome inordinate deſires? Do you not fear the threatning of him who hath ſaid, *The Candle of the wicked ſhall be put out?* O then while it is called to day, make *Davids* prayer from your heart: ſay, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, thou ſhalt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time my Corn and Wine increaſed.*

Meditation XXXV.

Upon a Priſon.

SEneca hath this ſaying, *Præcogitati mali mollis ictus*, that the ſtroke of a forethought evil is more gentle and ſoft than if

if it were wholly unexpected; which ſuits Saint *Peters* counſel to the ſcattered Believers, not to think of the fiery trial, as if ſome ſtrange and new thing had happened unto them. A wiſe *Sufferer* therefore muſt do as a wiſe *builder*, ſit down firſt and count his coſt, leſt afterwards he expoſe himſelf to ſhame and ſcorn. He muſt firſt view a Priſon in his mind before he enter into it with his body, and throughly weigh what it is he muſt forgo, and what he muſt undergo, or elſe he will ſoon like *Iſſachar*, couch under his burden, and faint in the day of adverſity, his ſtrength being ſmall. For the change which a Priſon makes is the greateſt that can befall any, next to the Grave, and is but a little ſhort of it, if not equal unto it. Who can ſet down the ſeveral ſad evils which attend it in diſtinct particulars? And who can ſum them up into a total, that will not amount unto a death? Is not *Liberty*, which every Being naturally affects, turned into *Bondage?* Is not the *Society* of friends, which is the ſauce, if not the food, of life, changed into *Solitude?* Is not *Light*, whoſe approaches were anciently ſaluted with, *Welcome light*, induſtriouſly ſhut out, to make both Bonds and Solitude the more irkſome? Is not

every

every *ſenſe* offended with objects that are diſpleaſing unto them? What doth the *Eye* behold but the face of a grim Jayler? What doth the *Touch* feel, unleſs it be hard Fetters and cold walls? What is the *Smell* affected with, unleſs it be a loathſome ſtench? What doth the *Ear* hear, but the ratling of Chains, or the groans of ſome who are breathing out their laſt? And what is the food that is taſted, unleſs it be the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction? And is it not then wonderful, that ſuch a condition as this, which is as the very valley and ſhadow of death, ſhould ever be paſſed through without any diſtracting fears, without heart breaking ſorrows, yea, with great rejoycings in ſuch tribulations? It is true, that ſome there be who, like *ſullen Hawks*, live upon the *frets* and bear many of theſe things out of the ſtoutneſs of their ſtomach and their naturall courage. But alas! this is not to ſuffer as a Chriſtan, who doth not ſuffer out of *obſtinacy*, but out of *Conſcience*, who is not ſupported by his own inherent *ſtrength*, but by the *power* of God, which puts forth it ſelf in ſuch glorious effects ofttimes, as that it makes a greater change in the Priſon for the better, than ever the vileſt Priſon can make in the Priſoner for the

the worſe. Is it not the preſence of the King that makes the Court, let the Houſe be never ſo mean where he reſides? What then can that place be leſs than a *Palace* where the Preſence of God dwells in a ſpecial manner? He that ſhall read in the Book of the *Revelations* of a City or place that had no *Temple* in it, or had no *Sun* or *Moon* to ſhine in it, and then break off, would ſooner conjecture that he was beginning the deſcription of ſome forlorn place under the Northern Pole, than of the heavvenly *Jeruſalem*: But when he ſhall underſtand that *God* and the *Lamb* are the *Temple* of it, and the glory of God and the Lamb are the Eternal Light ſhining in it he will then ſay, as an awaked *Jacob*, *Surely this is none other but the houſe of God, and the place where himſelf dwelleth.* Such like thoughts muſt that man have of a Priſon who knows no more of it than what it is in appearance, a place of bondage, ſolitude, darkneſs, and ſore wants; but he who hath in this condition once experienced the preſence of God in it, how differently will he ſpeak of it? Have not many of the Saints, when ſhut up in a Dungeon, dated their Letters to their Friends from their *Palace*, from their *delectable Orchard*, from their *delicious Paradiſe*

diſe? Have they not gloried in their bonds, as being Gods Free-men, though mans Priſoners? Have they not in their ſolitude been raviſhed with the ſweetneſs of that Communion they have had with God, who alone hath been better than a thouſand Friends? Have they not been filled with *hidden Manna* in their ſouls, when their bodies have been pinched with the ſharpneſs of Famine? Have they not in the midſt of their Conflicts cryed out, *If it be thus ſweet to ſuffer for Chriſt, how full of Joy unſpeakable will it be to reign with him?* May I not then ſay to this timorous Chriſtian, as God did once to *Iſrael, Fear not to go down into* Egypt, *For I will go down with thee into* Egypt, *and I will ſurely bring thee up again* Fear not to go into a Priſon, in which God will be with you, and out of which he will deliver you with joy and triumph. It matters not what your preſſures be if God put under his everlaſting Arms, or who your Enemies be, if he be your Friend; or what your ſorrows be, if he be your Comforter. And this I may add, that commonly in the greateſt ſtraits he ſheweth the greateſt love, as waters run ſtrongeſt in the narroweſt paſſages. *As the ſufferings of Chriſt* (ſaith *Paul*) *abound in us*

ſo

ſo our Conſolation aboundeth by Chriſt. O therefore ſay as *David* did, *Though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear none evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me.*

Meditation XXXVI.

Upon the motion of the Sun on the Dyal.

IT was the ſaying of one, who was none of the leaſt of the Philoſophers, to him that asked him what he was born for? That it was to contemplate the Sun: But though it be not the *end* of mans *birth*, yet it may well be the *object* of his *thoughts*, in regard both of its *beauty* and *motion*. Holy *David* takes notice of them both in the ſame Pſalm, in which he compared the Sun, for its *Luſtre*, to a *Bridegroom* coming out of his chamber, cloathed in ſuch ſhining Array, as may draw the eyes of the Spectators towards him: And for its *ſwiftneſs*, to a ſtrong *Champion*, who runs his preſcribed courſe, both ſpeedily and unwearidly. *Tully*, in his *Academical Queſtions*, ſaith

ſaith, *Tanta incitatione fertur ut ejus celeritas quanta ſit ne cogitari quidem poſſit.* It is whirled about with that vehemency, that the greatneſſe of the Suns ſpeed cannot eaſily be imagined. Is it not then a Riddle, that at the ſame time when it travels thouſands of miles in the *Heavens* it ſhould make ſo ſlow a motion and progreſs on the *Dyal*, as not to move above the breadth of an inch or two? To the quickeſt eye its motion is imperceptible, and it ſo moves, as we can only ſay it hath moved, not that it doth. Now from whence comes this inequality, but from the vaſt diſproportion between the Heavens and the Earth; the one being but as a Center or ſmall prick, to an immenſe Circumference. O how happy and regular alſo would the lives and actions of men be, if after the ſame manner, they were moved to *heavenly* and *earthly* objects? To the one with a ſwiftneſſe like to that of the Sun in the *Firmament*. To the other with an inſenſibleneſſe, like to that of the Sun upon the *Dyal*. Sure ſuch a diſproportion doth the differing worth and excellency between the one and the other, juſtly challenge in our purſuit of them. Is it not meet that he who caſts a ſingle glance of his eye to the Creature ſhould beſtow a thouſand looks on his Sa-

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viour? And when he creeps to one, as a *Snail*, to fly to the other, as the *Eagle* to the Carkaſſe? He alone moves to God as much as he ought, who moves to him as much as he can, and ſtrives to repair the imperfection of that motion, with a real diſlike and regret of the ſlowneſſe of his own heart to the beſt of goods. But alas, if the rule by which men walk, muſt be thus bounded, or dilated according to the object to which they move, where ſhall we find that perſon that thus proportions the out-goings of his ſoul in his care, deſires, or induſtry? If the ſtandard and meaſure of goodneſſe ſhould be taken from the unweariedneſſe of mens travels, from the ſtrength of their affections, or from the fixed bent of their reſolutions, to obtain what they deſign to themſelves as their end: who muſt not then put the Crown of bleſſedneſſe upon the head of the Creature, which ought to be ſet at the foot of the Creatour? Who muſt not then conclude, that it is better building Tabernacles here, than ſeeking a Country which is above? Do not men contract their hearts to the things of Heaven, and dilate them to what is below? Do they not run and pant, to the very breathing out of their ſouls, after periſhing vanities, when they cannot be drawn to

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ſet one foot towards ſpiritual and divine Excellencies? Do they not take the wings of the Morning, and fly to the utmoſt end of the Earth in their muſings and thoughts, to find out riches that will not profit in the day of wrath? when their Eſſaies to Heaven are as weak as the Graſhoppers, who give only a ſmall flirt upwards, and then fall down to the Earth again. O that I could with plenty of tears bemoan that monſtruous *Ataxie* and perverſneſſe which ſin hath wrought in the moſt noble parts of man. Was not that agility of mind given unto him by God, that he might have his Converſation in Heaven, though his abode was on Earth? And that he might enter into the *holy* of *holies*, not like the High Prieſt, once in a year; but, in every prayer and duty, like a winged Angel, behold the face of God, and look into thoſe things that are within the Veil? But now alas! he can only, like that lapſed Angel, compaſs the Earth to and fro in his thoughts, and deſcend as low as Hell in his luſts, but cannot raiſe himſelf above the world, to the performance of the leaſt good. I feel, O my God, continually the ſad change which ſin hath made in me, not ſo much deſtroying my Faculties, as perverting them; I have not loſt the uſe of them

them, but the rectitude of them. I am no more weary of sinning, than a swift stream of running; the same weight of sin that hinders me from running the race which is set before me, hurries me to evil, and makes me, through the impulsions of Satan, to gather strength by an accessory impression. In the births of sin I am, like the *Hebrew* women, lively and quick of delivery; but in the bringing forth of whatever is good, like a slow *Egyptian* that needs the aid of a Midwife. I therefore beg of thee, holy Lord, to heal my distempers by thy grace, and to renew me in the spirit of my mind, that I may run the way of thy Commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart.

Meditation XXXVII.

Upon a Sun-Dyal and a Clock.

THese two Artificial measures of Time, give one and the same account of its motions, but in a very differing, if not contrary, manner. The *Clock* doth it by a motion of its own; but the *Sun-Dyal*, while it self is fixed, by an extrinsick motion of the Sun

Sun upon those Lines drawn upon it, *effects* the same thing. And this occasioned me to think in what a differing way the same services and duties of Religion are done by those that profess it. Some, like *Clocks*, have a Spring of motions in themselves, and the weight that quickens and actuates it, is love: They pray, confer, exercise holiness in their Conversation in a progressive manner, Salvation being nearer to them, than when they first believed. Others again are like *Sun-Dyals*, that are as useless posts in a gloomy day, and are destitute of all principles of motion. The Sun moveth upon them, but they stand still: The Spirit comes upon them, as it did on *Saul*; but themselves are not in the least moved by those duties that others may think they profit by. There is a light and shine which passeth upon their gifts and abilities, that may render them useful as well as visible unto others, but it affecteth no alteration in their heart to the bettering of themselves. What divine Visions and Propheſies did *Balaam* both see and utter concerning *Israel?* And how remarkable is the Preface which he sets before them? *The man whose eyes are open hath said*, yet his heart is fixed to the lust of Covetousnesse, and he is so far from taking

taking the leaſt ſtep towards their *Tents*, which with admiration he beholds to be goodly, as that he gives *Balack* counſel how to deſtroy them. Let not then any reſt in a bare illumination or tranſient work of the Spirit upon them, as if that ſuch things would be ſufficient evidences of the goodneſſe of their condition. Light may make a good head, but it is heat and motion that muſt make a good heart, without which all profeſſion of Religion is but an unſavoury Carkaſſe. Be wiſe therefore, O Chriſtians, and build not the foundation of your eternal happineſſe upon ſuch uncertain principles. May not the ſpirit *aſſiſt* where it never *inhabits?* May it not *move* upon him, whom it never *quickens?* Were not many *workers of iniquity*, who were *workers of miracles?* Were not many famous for their *Propheſies*, who were infamous for their *Profaneneſs?* Are not ſuch things made by Chriſt, the plea of many in the laſt day, for their admittance into heaven, whom he will not know? Why then ſhould any be ſo fooliſh to make that a Plea to the Judge, which he knows beforehand will be rejected? The beſt way to diſcern our condition, is not to argue the goodneſſe of it, from the light which the Spirit darts in upon us, but by the motions

tions which it produceth in us. As many as are the Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God, in a constant way of progression, from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue. Such light, as it is sudden in its *Eruptions*, so it is also in its *Interruptions*; the one oft times are as speedy and momentary as the other. Look therefore to the *attractions* of the Spirit by which you are moved, and drawn to walk in holy wayes, rather than to such *motions* of the Spirit, which pass only upon you, but do not beget any motion or stirring in you.

Meditation XXXVIII.

Upon the payment of a Pepper-corn.

LOgicians have a Maxim, that, *Relationes sunt minimæ entitatis, & maximæ efficaciæ*, Relations are of the smallest Entity, and of the greatest efficacy: The truth of which may appear in this payment of a single Pepper-corn, that if *Freeholders* pay to their *Landlord*, they do it not with any hope or intent to inrich him; but to acknowledge that they hold

all from him. To effect the one, it is of too mean a value, yet it preserves the *Lords* right as fully as a greater Rent, and aggravates the *Tenants* folly to withhold, more than if the demands had been higher. To such an one may be justly said, what *Naamans* Servant spake unto him, *If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* If the condition, which meer bounty happily hath made so easie, had been by the same hand and power restrained to a more costly and ample homage, ought it not to have been performed? How much more when nothing is required, but what may witness a dependency and not burden it? How inexcusable then must the ingratitude of those men be, who, receiving all their blessings from God, withhold that *Pepper-corn* of praise and honour from him, which is the onely thing that they can pay, or that he expects? to cast the least Mite into his Treasury, which may add to its riches, is beyond the Line of Men or Angels, for if it could admit an increase, the abundance of it were not infinite: but to adore its fulness, and to acknowledg that from it they derive theirs, is the duty of

all that partake of it. This is the only homage that thoſe Stars of the Morning, and ſons of God, who behold his face, do give in heaven; and this is it which the Children of men ſhoud give on Earth. But alas! from how few of thoſe ſacred dues are tendred to God, though all be his debtors? Doth not the rich man, when wealth floweth in upon him like a river, forget that the Lord only giveth him power to get riches? and ſacrifice unto his Net, and burn Incenſe unto his Drag? Is it not the ſin that God chargeth all *Iſrael* with, that *they rejoyce in a thing of nought, and ſay, have we not taken horns to us by our own ſtrength?* Yea, doth he not expreſly ſay, that he will not give his glory unto another? Shall any man then take it unto himſelf? And yet, what ſtoln bread is ſo ſweet to any taſt as the ſecret nimmings and purloinings of Gods glory are unto the palate of moſt? If any deſign be effected, they think that their wiſdom hath brought it about; If any difficulties be removed, they aſcribe it to their Induſtry; if ſucceſs and victory do build upon their Sword, it is their own Arm, and right hand that hath obtained it. O how great is that Pride and unthankfulneſs which reigns in the hearts of men, who affect to rob God rath

rather than to honour him, and to deny him to be the Author of what they poſſeſs, than to acknowledge their Tenure that they hold all in *Capite*. Stealing from men may be acquitted again with ſingle, or double, with fourfold, or ſevenfold reſtitution: but the filching from Gods glory can never be anſwered; for who can give any thing to him which he hath not received? Others may ſteal of neceſſity, to ſatisfie their hunger; but ſuch violate, out of pride and wantonneſs, the *Exchequer of heaven*, and ſhall never eſcape undetected or unpuniſhed. Conſider therefore this all ye who are ready to kiſs your own hands for every bleſſing that comes upon you, to what danger you expoſe your ſelves, while you rob God, *whoſe name is Jealous*, who will vindicate the glory of his neglected goodneſs in the ſevere triumph of his impartial Juſtice. It is *Bernards* Expreſſion, *Uti datis, ut innatis, eſt maxima ſuperbia*, To uſe Gods gifts as things inbred in us, is the higheſt arrogancy; and what leſs can it merit, than the very Condemnation of the Devil? Whoſe firſt ſin (as ſome Divines conceive) was an affectation of independent happineſs, without any reſpect or habitude unto God. I cannot a little wonder, that

the blackneſs of his ſin, and the dreadfulneſs of his Fall, ſhould not make all to fear the leaſt ſhadow and ſemblance of ſuch a crime in themſelves, as muſt bring upon them the like ruine: Look upon him, you proud ones, and tremble, who are abettors of *Nature* againſt *Grace*, and reſolve the ſalvation of man ultimately into the freedom of his Will, rather than into the efficacy of Gods Grace; who in the work of Converſion make the Grace of God to have only the work of a *Midwife*, to help the Child into the world, but not to be the Parent and ſole Author of it. Is not this to croſs the great deſign of the Goſpel, which is to exalt the honour of God and of Chriſt? that *he that glorieth might glory in the Lord*. And is not every tittle of the Goſpel as dear to God, as every tittle of the Law? Can then any diminiſh ought from it and be guiltleſſe? Oh fear then to take the leaſt due from God, who hath threatned to take his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in the Book of God. *Non eſt devotionis, dediſſe propè totum; ſed fraudis, retinuiſſe vel minimum;* It is not devotion, ſaith *Proſper*, rightly againſt his *Collator*, to acknowledge almoſt all from God, but accurſed

curſed theft to aſcribe, though but very little to our ſelves. Lord therefore, whatever others do, keep me humble, that, as I receive all from thee, ſo I may render that tribute of praiſe which thou expectest from me, both chearfully, and faithfully; and though it can adde nothing to thy perfection, no more than my beholding and admiring the Suns light can encreaſe it; yet let me ſay, as holy *David* did, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and thy truths ſake.*

Meditation XXXIX.

Upon the Bucket and the Wheel.

THe ſaying of *Democritus*, which he ſpake concerning *Philoſophical* truth, that it did *latitare in puteo*, hide it ſelf, and take up its abode in a dark and deep Well, may much more be affirmed of *Theological* truth, when the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel, is called the *Myſtery of Chriſt*, and *the great Myſtery of Godlineſs*, that there

ſhould be three *diſtinct Perſons* in one Eſſence, and two diſtinct Natures in one Perſon. That *Virginity* ſhould conceive, *Eternity* be born, *Immortality* dye, and *Mortality* riſe from death to life; Are not theſe, and many more of the like intricacy, unparalleled myſteries? May we not juſtly ſay, as the *Samaritan*-woman did to our Saviour, when he asked water of her, *Puteus profundus eſt*, the Well is deep, and who can deſcend into it, or fathome it? And yet ſuch is the pride and arrogancy of many men, as that, not contenting themſelves with the *ſimplicity* of believing, many make *Reaſon* the ſole ſtandard, whereby to meaſure both the *Principles* and *Concluſions* of Faith: for which it is as unapt, as the weak Eye of a Bat, to behold the Sun when it ſhineth in its full ſtrength; or the Bill of a ſmall Bird, to receive into it the Ocean. Theſe high Myſteries are not to be *ſcanned*, but to be believed; the knowledge and certainty of which, doth not ariſe from the *evidence* of reaſon, but from the *revelation* made of them in holy Scriptures; the mouth of God, who is truth it ſelf, and cannot lye, hath ſpoken them, and therefore it cannot be otherwiſe. But muſt then *reaſon* be wholly ſhut out, as a uſeleſſe thing in the Chriſtian *Religion*,

ligion, or muſt it be confined to the *agenda*, matters of *duty and morality*; in which it cannot be denied, to be both of neceſſary and conſtant uſe? Surely even the *Credenda* alſo, the *Doctrines* and points which are properly of *Faith*, do not refuſe the ſober uſe of *Reaſon*, ſo it be imployed as an *Handmaid*, and not as a *Miſtreſs*. I have therefore thought that Faith is as the Bucket, which can beſt deſcend this deep Well of Myſtery; and that *Reaſon* is as the Wheel, which ſtands over the mouth of it, and keeps alwaies its certain and fixed diſtance: But yet by its motion, is inſtrumental both to let down the *Bucket*, and alſo to draw it up again. Faith diſcovers the deep things of God, and then reaſon teacheth us to ſubmit our ſelves, and it, to the obedience of Faith, that ſo it is. But it never becomes more *fooliſh* and *dangerous*, than when it buſies its ſelf in Inquiries, and makes *Nicodemus* his queſtion, *How can theſe things be?* Then it turns giddy, and loſeth its ſelf in diſtracted rounds and motions. Alas! how unlike would the waies and Counſels of God be unto himſelf, if they were no other, but ſuch as the Wiſeſt of Men could trace out? How little glory would Faith alſo give to God, if it did not put forth its ſtrength in aſſert-

ing his Power to effect greater things than can fall within the compaſs of Natural diſquiſition? Yea, how ſhould the Goſpel, in its Inſtitutions, Doctrines, and Worſhip, be acquitted of the *Jews* ſtumbling at it, as diſhonourable to their Law; and the *Gentiles* deriding of it, as abſurd, in their *Philoſophy*, if that reaſon muſt be the meaſure of its Myſteries? Nature is ſo far from finding out what the Goſpel diſcovers, as that it cannot yield unto it, when it is revealed, without a ſpirit of Faith to aſſiſt it. Be wiſe therefore, O Chriſtians, and ſet bounds to your Reaſon, beyond which it may not paſs, as *Moſes* did to the *Iſraelites*, whileſt Faith deſcendeth into the deeps of Goſpel Myſteries, which *Angels*, with ſtretched out necks have more *deſire* to pry to, than ability perfectly to underſtand. Now the boundary of Reaſon is, *Conferre & inferre*; to *confer* one Scripture with another, and to *infer* Concluſions, and to deduce Inſtructions thence, by a clear Logical Diſcourſe. But if it go further to gaze, it may juſtly fear to be ſmitten of God: and, like a *Pyoneer*, or bold Miner, which digs in too far for his rich Vein of *Ore*, meet with a damp which choaks him. My Prayer therefore ſhall be, that of the *Apoſtles* to Chriſt, *Adde nobis fidem*, *Lord increaſe*

creaſe our faith. For if my faith do not exceed my reaſon, though advanced to as high a pitch as ever *Solomon* had, yet might I well be numbred among thoſe, whom St. *Peter* ſaith, *are blinde, and cannot ſee afar off.*

Meditation XL.

Upon Baniſhment.

EXile is a Change of place that brings no evil with it, but in opinion; a Complaint, and affliction wholly imaginary, is the deſcription ſome have made of it. But it ſeems to me to be rather a *Stoicks* vaunt, than a *Chriſtians* juſt eſtimate, of the evils of that condition. What trial elſe would it have been of *Abrahams* Faith, to leave his *Country, Kindred, and Fathers Houſe, and to go to a Land God would ſhew him?* or, why did God injoyn *Iſrael* to pitty Srangers; becauſe themſelves had been Strangers in the Land of *Ægypt?* Why have *Legiſlators* deemed it as a puniſhment for grand Crimes, and next to Capital? or, why have many looked upon it as worſe than death; chuſing rather the *lot* of the *Goat* that was to be Sacri-

ced, than the lot of the *Scape Goat*, which was, to be sent into the Wilderness? Is it not because (as *Philo* saith) Death is the full end of all evils? but Banishment the beginning of many new ones? Want, Scorn, Oppressions, unjust Jealousies, are the daily hard Measures that Exiles must expect to meet with: he must thank him who demands his Coat, that he asketh not his Life; and he must oft times redeem his Life, with that little Money which he hath, that should buy him Bread to preserve it. He must be armed with nothing but patience, lest he be apprehended as one that hath in design the death of some other. And yet how many Arguments of comfort can my thoughts suggest to such Christians, who for the Truths sake either dread this Cross, or feel it. They break forth so on the right hand, and on the left, as that methinks I hear them Sing, O ye Banished, cry aloud, for more are the comforts of the desolate, than the comforts of those that sit under the shadow of their own roof. I will not tell you that you have the same Sun and Moon to shine upon you that Kings have; that the Stars appear unto you in the same greatness and beauty which they do to others; that you injoy the same common Elements that all do. These, and such like

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topicks are to be plentifully found among the *Moraliſts*. But all their *Precepts* and *Sentences* are like Arrows that fall ſhort of the Mark. They could never reach that ſolid contentment they levelled at. Hear then, ye dejected Chriſtians, what your comforts are, whoſe Croſſes are no more than others, and whoſe ſupports are far greater. Are you Baniſhed from your Native Country? what other condition do you undergo than *Abraham* did, the *Father of the Faithful*, and the *Friend of God*? and will you murmur if God deal with you no worſe than with his Favourite? If you are out of your own Land, do you not ſtill tread upon your Fathers ground? is not *the Earth the Lords, and the fulneſs of it*? Did never any thrive in a ſtrange Soyl, and, like tranſplanted Trees, gain by the Change? have ye forgot what God did for *Joſeph* in *Egypt*? or for *Daniel and his Aſſociates* in their Captivity? who like Stars when they ſet in one Hemiſphere, did riſe gloriouſly in another? But if ſtill you be impatient, and in diſlike with your Eſtate; let me ask you, If the beſt of a wicked Mans condition be not worſe? Is it not better to hunger and thirſt for righteouſneſs ſake, than to fare deliciouſly every day, with the rich Glutton in the Goſpel? Is it not more eligible

gible to be an *Iſraelite* in the Wilderneſs, than to be a Courtier in *Egypt*? can you not ſpeak better of your *Miſeries*, than wicked Men can do of their *Mercies*? you may ſay, bleſſed *Hunger*, bleſſed *Poverty*, bleſſed *Mourning*, bleſſed *Perſecutions* and *Revilings*; Chriſt himſelf having bleſſed your Afflictions, and alſo curſed their enjoyments: He hath entailed an eternal *woe* upon all thoſe things wherein they place their welfare; their *Riches*, their *Fulneſs*, their *Mirth*, their *Applauſe*, and *Credit* with all Men: and he hath promiſed, to them that endure temptations, a Crown of Life when they are tried. Be not therefore diſmayed, O ye of little Faith, who have every bitter thing, at preſent, ſweetned with Promiſes, and within a little while ſhall have all the hardſhips of a deſart, turned into the Plenty of an Heavenly *Canaan*. And yet methinks ſome there be, who are ſtill unſatisfied, and ask, if it be nothing to part with dear Relations, and ſociety of Friends? and to be caſt upon ſtrange Faces, and Languages, that they underſtand not? to be at once in great meaſure both deaf and dumb, not hearing what others ſay unto them, and being alſo unable to ſpeak the leaſt word to others. That theſe are ſore evils, I ſhall not make it any part of my

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task to deny; But yet how many are there who have expoſed themſelves to all theſe evils, and have undergone them voluntarily, which you ſuffer out of conſtraint? have not ſome for curioſity ſake, and a thirſt of knowledge travelled through vaſt and dangerous Wilderneſſes, and born, with much patience, the exceſs of heat and cold? Have not others out of a covetous deſire of gain parted with Friends and Country for many years? may I not then ſend the *faint-hearted Chriſtian* to learn of the *reſolute Worlding*, as *Solomon* doth the *Sluggard* to the *Piſmire?* ſhall he ſet an higher eſtimate upon Earthly Treaſures than you upon Heavenly? ſhall he out-face dangers that you ſhrink at? ſhall he quit Parents and Children that are pieces of himſelf, and imbrace ſolitude in forraign Regions, and ſhall you reckon your ſelf as free among the dead while you do the ſame thing? O what advantages have you above him, both to do and ſuffer? In your *ſolitude* you may ſay as Chriſt did in his, *Yet am I not alone, becauſe the Father is with me.* In your Sorrows you may glory, as *Paul* did, *This is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity we have had our Converſation in the World.* In the loſs and ſpoil of your

your Eſtates, you may pray, as *Paulinus* did, when the *Gothes* ranſacked *Nola*: *Domine, ne excrucier propter aurum & argentum; ubi enim omnia mea ſunt, tu ſcis*, Lord, let not the loſs of theſe things diſquiet me: for thou knoweſt where I have laid up all my treaſures. In your Baniſhment you may comfort your ſelves with the common lot of all believers, who are no other than Pilgrims, and Strangers, while they are at home in the Body, and abſent from the Lord? I ſhall add no more but an excellent ſaying of *Baſil*, *Cui adhuc patria ſolum dulcis eſt, nimis delicatus eſt, cui omnis terra patria, fortis eſt; cui omnis terra exilium ſanctius eſt*, He to whom his Native Countrey is only ſweet, is too delicate; he to whom every Land is his Countrey, is valiant; and he to whom all the Earth is a Baniſhment, is truely holy.

Meditation

Meditation XLI.

Upon the Breaſt and the ſucking-Bottle.

THe word of God, by which Men are turned from darkneſs unto light, is ſometimes compared unto *Seed*, and ſometimes unto *Milk*; and the *Miniſters* of it, ſometimes unto *Fathers*, and ſomtimes unto *Nurſes*: This double relation points forth their double Duty, which is not only as *ſpiritual Fathers* to beget Men unto Chriſt; but, as *nurſing Mothers*, to give them the *full Breaſts* of the ſincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and of new-born Babes may become ſtrong in the Faith, and filled with all knowledg and wiſedom in the things of God. But how is this done? is it by *Reading* onely the Scriptures, without giving the Senſe, though that be a Publick Ordinance of God, and highly to be honoured of all? or by a diligent and well digeſted *Preaching* of them, in which the Truths delivered are ſucked in as Milk from the Breaſt that partakes of the warmth and ſpirits of the Nurſe? Some Miniſters who have conſulted

sulted more for their own Ease than their Peoples profit, have endeavoured to maintain *Reading* to be *Preaching*, as if that were a sufficient discharge of their Duty. But what then will become of the Apostles question? *Who is sufficient for these things?* it should then be rather, who is not sufficient? or, of what use will be his Counsel, *To preach in season, and out of season, and to divide the Word of God aright, as a workman that needeth not be ashamed?* True it is, that if Preaching be taken largely, for any Declaration, or Publishing of the Word of God, it cannot be denyed to be Preaching; but if it be taken strictly for Preaching by way of *Office*, and for *Ministerial* Publishing of the Gospel, then it is quite another thing. Was there not a wide difference between the Woman of *Samaria* her making known of Christ, and the Apostles Preaching of him; or between *Andrew's* calling of his brother *Peter* before he was put into his Apostolical Office, and his Preaching of Christ when Commissionated by him? and what less difference is there between a Naked Reading of the Scripture, or some other set Discourses, and the Powerful Preaching of the Word? But if Trial and Experience could better evince, than Argument, those who justifie the

the Opinion by their Practice; I could wiſh that ſuch might bring forth their Children, who have lived wholly upon the ſingular means of *Reading* and let their Countenance be looked upon, and the Countenance of thoſe who have had the Word duly *Preached* unto them, and then let others Judge whether their Countenance appear as fair and fat as their Brethrens. O how quickly would it be diſcerned which they are, which have received their nouriſhment from the *Breaſt*, and which from the *Bottle?* it would ſoon be judged that the weak are the Flock of *Laban*, and the ſtrong the Flock of *Jacob*, which God hath by far bleſſed above the other. Think then upon it, O ye ſloathful ones, to whoſe care God hath committed the welfare of many Souls, how you will anſwer your neglect to God! If the chief Officer was afraid that his witholding the Kings appointed Meat from *Daniel* and his *Companions*, might indanger his head to his Lord, ſhould he ſee their Faces worſe liking than the Children of their ſort; what cauſe will ye have to fear the diſpleaſure of Chriſt when he ſhall behold the wan and pale lookes of thoſe for whom he dyed, by your deteining the Breaſt from them, who ſhould have been nouriſh-

nouriſhed up in the words of Faith, and good Doctrine? Nor ſhall ye, O Chriſtians, who ſleight Ordinances, and turn your back upon the Breaſts of Conſolation, which are held forth unto you, eſcape any better than the Miniſters who deny them to their People: If it be a ſin to do the one, it is no leſs, if not greater, in you to do the other. They ſin againſt the ſouls of others, and you ſin againſt your own Souls: And yet how great are the numbers upon whom the guilt of this Crime may be charged? Some think, that they are paſt their Childhood, and therefore *Wean* themſelves; they know as much as their *Teachers* can tell them, and to what end then ſhould they ſtill give them their Attendance? to hanker after the Breaſt is for Babes, not for grown Perſons? But are not they which thus ſpeak puffed up, and know nothing as they ought? Is not this whole life a ſtate of Infancy in reſpect of perfection? doth not the Apoſtle ſay, that *we ſee but darkly, and know but in part.* Why then ſhould the old *Mnaſons* be more aſhamed of theſe Breaſts, than the young *Timothies? David* profeſſed himſelf as a weaned Child from the *World*, but never from the *Word.* Others pleaſe themſelves, that though they go not to

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Hear, yet they read good Books, and better Sermons, at home, than their Miniſters can make; and ſo take themſelves not to be leſs zealous, but onely more diſcreet than their Brethren who do not the like. And yet who can excuſe ſuch Perſons from the guilt both of folly and wickedneſs? Is it not folly to refuſe the warm *breaſt*, and to ſuck the Milk from the *bottle*, when it is diſpirited, and hath loſt both its warmth and lively taſte? and what leſs difference is there between a Sermon in the *Pulpit*, and in the *Preſs*? Is it not alſo wickedneſs to offer *Sacriledge* for. *Sacrifice*, and to rob God of one Duty, to pay him another; to withold the greater, and to ſeem Conſcientious in the leſs? Are they not in thus doing *fures de ſe*, Thieves to their own Souls, depriving themſelves of the profit of both, while they are wilful neglecters of each. Be wiſe therefore, O Chriſtians, in keeping up an high eſteem of the Word Preached, and be alwayes as Babes for hunger and deſire after it; though not for knowledg and underſtanding in it. And remember that there is no way ſo dangerous to leſſen your deſires, as to to keep your ſelves faſting from it. For the Word of God ſtill creates new appetites, as it ſatisfies the old; and enlargeth the

the capacities of the Soul, as it fills it. Uſe good Books as Apothecaries do their *Succedanea*, one ſimple to ſupply the want of another; when the Preacher cannot be had, then make uſe of them; but let it rather be to ſtay the ſtomach in the abſence of an Ordinance, than to ſatisfie it. And when you enjoy both, ſay as *Ariſtotle* ſometimes did of the *Rhodian* and *Leſbian* Wine, when he had taſted of both; that the *Rhodian* was good too, but the *Lesbian* was the pleaſanter. Holy Books are good, and reliſh well, but the Word Preached is more ſweet; the one is as the Wine the Bridegroom provided at the Marriage Feaſt, and the other is as that which Chriſt made, which was eaſily diſcerned by the Governour, who knew not whence it was, to be by far the better.

Meditation XLII.

Upon Mixtures.

THe wiſe God hath ſo tempered the whole Eſtate of Man in this life, as that it conſiſteth altogether of *Mix-*

Mixtures; There is no ſweet without ſower, nor ſower without ſweetneſs. All ſimples, in any kind, would prove dangerous, and be as uncorrected drugs, which adminiſtred unto the Patient would not recover him but deſtroy him. Conſtant Sorrow without any Joy would *ſwallow us up*; and ſimple Joy without any Grief would *puff us up*, both Extreams would agree alike in our ruine: he being in as dangerous a caſe who is ſwoln with Pride, as he who is ovewhelmed with Sorrow. This *Mixture* then, though it ſeem *penal* and prejudicial to our comfort, is yet *Medicinal*, and is by God, as a wiſe Phyſician, ordered as a Diet moſt ſuitable to our Condition; and if we did but look into the grounds of it, we ſhall find cauſe to acknowledge Gods wiſe Providence, and to frame our hearts to a ſubmiſſion of his will, without murmuring at what he doth. For, have we not two Natures in us, the *Spirit* and *Fleſh*, the *New* and the *Old Man*? have we not *twins* in our Womb, our Counter-luſtings, and our Counter-willings? Are we not as Plants that are ſeated between the two different Soils of *Earth* and *Heaven*? Is there not then a neceſſity of a mixed Diet, that is made up of two Contraries? The Phyſitian is not leſs loy-

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al to his Prince, he if give to him an unpleasing *Vomit*, and to a poor Man, a cheering *Cordial*; becauſe his Applications are not according to the dignity of the Perſon, but to the quality of the Diſeaſe: neither is God the leſs kinde, when he puts into our hand the bitter *Cup* of affliction to drink of, than when he makes us to taſte of the *Flaggons* of his ſweeteſt wine. *Paul* his *Thorn in his Fleſh*, what ever the meaning of it be, was uſeful to keep down that tumour of pride, which the abundance of Revelations might have expoſed him unto: and ſo joyned together they were, like the *rod* and the *Honey* which enlightned *Jonathans* eyes: when he had taſted the ſweetneſs of the one, God would have him feel the ſmart of the other. At the ſame time alſo, when God bleſſed *Jacob*, he Crippled him, that he might not think above what was meet of his own ſtrength, or aſcribe his prevailing to the vehemency of his Wraſtling, rather than to Gods gracious condeſcention. Yea, who is it that hath not experienced ſuch *Mixtures*, to be the conſtant Methods which he uſeth towards his deareſt Children? what are the lives of the beſt Chriſtians, but as a Rainbow, which conſiſts half of the moiſture of a Cloud, and half of the light and beams of the

the Sun? *Weeping* (ſaith *David*) *may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning.* And what other thing doth the Apoſtle ſpeak of himſelf, when he gives the *Corinthians* an account of his condition? *As dying, and behold we live; as chaſtened, and not killed; as ſorrowful, and yet alwaies rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, but yet poſſeſſing all things.* Bleſſed then is he, who doth without repining, yield himſelf to the diſpoſe of Divine Providence, rather than accuſe it; and looks not ſo much to what at preſent is grateful to the ſenſe, as to what for the future will be profitable to the whole. For in theſe Mixtures, *Magna latent beneficia, etſi non fulgeant*, great advantages do lye hid, though not ſhine forth. Hereby we are put upon the exerciſe of all thoſe Graces, which are accommodated to our imperfect ſtate here below, whoſe acts ſhall be compleated in Heaven, but ſhall all ceaſe, as being not capacitated for a Fruition; and yet are of great uſe while we are on this ſide Heaven. How neceſſary is *Patience*, to bear up the Soul under trials, that it fret not againſt God who inflicts them? How greatly doth *Hope* temper any preſent ſoar, by its expectation of ſome happy change that may and will follow,

low, and ſo worketh joy in the midſt of ſadneſs? How, even to wonder, doth Faith manifeſt its power in all diſtreſſes, when it apprehends that there are no degrees of extremity unrelieveable by the Arm of God, or inconſiſtent with his compaſſions and friendſhip? Again, ſuch Mixtures ſerve to work in us a great hatred of ſin, and an earneſt longing after Glory; in which, our life, light, joyes, are all pure, and everlaſting. Our life is without any ſeed of death, our light without any ſhadow of darkneſs, and our joyes endleſs *Hallelujahs*, without the interruption of one ſigh. Therefore are we burdened in our Earthly Tabernacle, that we ſhould the more groan, to be clothed upon with our houſe which is from Heaven. Therefore yet have we the remainders of ſin, by which we are unlike God; and the firſt-fruits only of the ſpirit, by which we reſemble him; that we might long and wait for the *Adoption* and *Redemption*, wherein, what ever is blended and imperfect, ſhall be done away. When not to ſin, which is here only our *Duty*, ſhall be the top branch of our reward and bleſſedneſs. O holy Lord, I complain not of my preſent lot; for though it be not free from Mixture, yet it is greatly differing from what others finde and feel, whoſe

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lines are not fallen in ſo fair a place: But ſtill I ſay, when ſhall I dwell in that bleſſed Country where ſorrows dye, and joyes cannot? Into which, Enemy never entred, and from which a Friend never parted? When ſhall I poſſeſs that Inheritance, which is a *Kingdome* for its greatneſs, and a *City* for its beauty, where there is Society without Envy, and rich Communications of good without the leaſt diminution?

Meditation XLIII.

Upon Time and Eternity.

THe two Eſtates of this and the other World, are meaſured by *Time*, and by *Eternity*, as their juſt and proper meaſures, there being nothing in this World, which is not as *tranſient* as *Time*; nor in the other, which is not as *fixed* and laſting as *Eternity*. How inexpreſſible then muſt the *good* and *evil*, the *happineſs* and the *miſery* of thoſe two Eſtates differ from each other? What is the duration of all earthly greatneſs, in reſpect of the ſtability of heavenly glory, but as a flaſh of lightning to a ſtanding Sun in the Firmament; or as a

ſpark aſcending from a furnace, to a never ſetting Star? What are the moſt fiery tryals of this life, either for *intenſion*, or *length*, unto the everlaſting burnings and ſcorchings of hell; but as the ſoft and gentle heat of a bluſhing face, unto the conſtant flames and torments of the bowels? What are Racks, Stone, Collick, Strangury, Convulſions, heaped together into an extream horrour, but as the ſimple grudgings of an Ague, to the deſperate rage and anguiſh which the leaſt bite of that worm that dies not, creates in the loweſt faculty of the ſoul? There are additions to things which are *limited*, and *diminuent* terms of that to which they are annexed; and contain in them (as *Logicians* ſpeak) *oppoſitum in oppoſito*, one oppoſite in another. He that ſaith, a *dead man*, or a *painted Lyon*, by ſaying more, ſaith leſs than if he had ſaid but a *Man*, or a *Lyon* only, without any ſuch additions; it is all one in effect, as if he had ſaid no *Man*, no *Lyon*: For a *dead man* is not a man, neither is a *painted Lyon* a Lyon. Such are the additions of Time, which put to *good* or *evil*, expreſs leſs than if nothing had been added. He that ſaith, *happineſs for a ſeaſon*, or *ſorrow for a time*, ſaith leſs, than if he had ſaid happineſs or ſorrow only: For perfect *happineſs* or *ſorrow* cannot be circum-

circumscribed in the narrow limits of time, no more than Immensity in the points of a place. What is happiness that will expire, but misery at a distance? Or what is sorrow that endures only for a time, but an evil, supported by hope? But adde Eternity to *good or evil*, and it makes the good to be infinitely better, and the evil to be infinitely worse. Can I then do less than wonder, that men, who carry eternal souls in their bosoms, such as are of kin to *Teraphims*, yea, advanced to the participation of the Divine Nature, that are the immediate Subjects of Endless woe, or bliss, should yet so live, *Ac si fabula esset omnis æternitas*, as if Eternity were a fable; as if they had neither God to serve, or souls to save? May I not say, be astonished O Heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, as the Lord himself did at *Israels* folly? What greater stupidity can there be, than this which most are guilty of, to busie themselves, like *Martha*, about perishing trifles, and to neglect the one thing which is necessary? To be thoughtful of things below, and seldome think of Heaven, till death summon them to leave Earth? To make Salvation the by-work of their lives, and the fulfilling the appetites of the flesh their chiefest task and care? Were it not

a ſtrange thing, if a man, who is to be judged on the morrow, and to receive the ſentence either of a cruel death, or of a rich & honourable eſtate, could not keep in mind the concernments of the next approaching day, without tying ſome Scarlet thred upon his finger, as a *ſignificant Ceremony* to remember him? Or the writing of ſome *Caveats* upon the poſts of the Priſon, which might hint unto him what danger his life is in? Is it not much more ſtrange, that the weighty matters of eternal life, or eternal death, ſhould not by their own greatneſs, preſs the heart of man unto a conſtant remembrance of them, eſpecially when he knoweth not what a day may bring forth? Can the miſcarriage of ſuch a perſon be other than dreadful, when their *follies*, as well as their *pains*, ſhall make them to gnaſh their teeth, and to curſe themſelves for the neglect of that great Salvation, which hath been often tendred them in the Goſpel? When they ſhall feel everlaſtingly, what they could never be perſwaded for to fear? When they ſhall be convinced, that at a far cheaper rate they might have been Saints in Heaven, than *Salamanders* in Hell? O that I could therefore awaken and excite all thoſe, whom the preſent enjoyments of the world, ſerve as *Opium*

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to caſt them into a deep ſleep, and will happily be angry with thoſe that ſeek to raiſe them out of it, though they keep them from periſhing in it. And how can I better do it, than in St. *Chryſoſtomes* expreſſions to this purpoſe? Suppoſe a man, ſaith he, much deſirous of ſleep, and in his perfect mind, had an offer made of one nights ſweet reſt, upon condition to be puniſhed an hundred years for it, would he accept of his ſleep upon ſuch terms? Now, do not they (who would be loath to be reputed fools) do far worſe, that for the ſhort fruition of a few tranſient delights, hazard a double Eternity, the loſs of an Eternity of bleſſedneſs, and the ſuſtaining of an Eternity of miſeries? for what other proportion can all earthly things bear to heavenly, in reſpect of their duration, than a few beatings of the pulſe, or twinklings of the eye, unto Myriads of Ages? Be then timely wiſe, ye worldlings, in a frequent conſideration of your eternal being, that you may not paſs your life away in a dream of happineſs, and awake in the horrour of a begun Eternity in miſery. Say unto your ſelves, are we not in the world, as the Child conceived is in the womb, not to abide there, but to come out in a due time, to a more full and free life? Why then do we

fondly think of building Tabernacles here? Why do we ſo pleaſe our ſelves in our preſent condition, as to be wholly regardleſs of our future? Is not death ſuch a combate as we never enter into but once, and therein are either ſaved, or ſlain eternally? Why do we then make little or no proviſion againſt what we know will, and muſt certainly follow? Do we think that our glory ſhall deſcend after us, and skreen us from Gods fiery indignation? Will our riches purchaſe heaven, or bribe hell? Will the firſt-born of our body be accepted for the ſin of our ſoul? What is it that makes our cares and fears ſo prepoſterous? are we anxious for to morrow, and thoughtleſs of Eternity? we fear the *Grave*, and mock at *Hell*; we dread the *Lightning*, and ſlight the *Thunder-bolt*. O methinks ſuch pungent Interrogations ſhould ſtartle the moſt ſecure, if they would but put Conſcience upon an anſwer, and not, like *Pilate*, only ask the queſtion, and then go their way. It is mens living by ſenſe, that is that ſtone of ſtumbing, upon which they ruine themſelves: Some ſurfet and over-charge themſelves with ſenſual delights, as that their Intellectuals are wholly loſt to all acts of Reaſon; others who have jealouſies concerning their future eſtates, are more willing

ling to venture what the iſſue will be, than undergo an impartial trial; they fear more what ſentence Conſcience will paſs, than the Condemnation that God will inflict. Few there be that put Time and Eternity in the Ballance, and weigh them one againſt the other, or conſider, that life, upon which Eternity depends, is a *vapour*, a *wind*, a *ſpan*, at moſt, which the further it is ſtretched, the more painful it is: And that Eternity is a bottomleſs gulph, which no Line can fathome, no time can reach, no tongue can expreſs. It is a duration alwaies preſent, a being alwaies in being, an everlaſting now; It ſwallows up all revolutions of Ages, as *Pharoahs* lean Kine did eat up the fat, which when they had eatten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them, but were ſtill as at the beginning. What ſtrange thing can we imagine, that in its duration would not be effected? A tear let fall from the damned once in ten thouſand years, would fill the earth with far more water, than it was covered with in the Deluge. A duſt taken from the Mountains, and uneven parts of the world, would in the like intervals, level the Univerſe, and turn it into a Plain, and yet there would be ſtill an Eternity behinde. *Never, never,* is the killing

word that breaks the heart of all these hopeless Prisoners, that lye buried in the flames of Hell. Suppositions and possibilities which I tremble to think of, if they might be but turned into promises unto them, of the termination of their anguish and torment; O how would their hearts revive within them, and how thankfully would they acknowledge Gods goodness unto them? Do thou therefore, O glorious Lord, who art the Ancient of daies, the Rock of Ages, the Father of Eternity, *teach me to number my daies, that I may apply my heart unto true wisdome*, that I may walk in the way of life which is above to the wise, and depart from hell beneath.

Meditation XLIV.

Upon a Physitians feeling the Pulse.

HOw often and how exactly do *Physitians* feel the *Pulse* of their Patients? Not a day passeth without a strict observation of the motions that it makes, according unto which they judge both of the greatness and danger of the distemper,

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and what the Issues are like to be both in respect of life and death. They do not, as other Visitors, ask the Patient how he doth, but inform him rather how he is, and from the report they make of his maladie, his fears and hopes are the more or less. And yet how rarely do they feel their own pulse, who are seemingly anxious about anothers? Daies, Weeks, Months do Elapse, and pass away, without any such studious heeding of themselves, as they continually in their profession Exercise towards others. And yet happily in so doing they are as the Priests in the Temple, who (as our Saviour saith) prophane the Sabbath and are blameless. But they occasion me to think of the practice of many, who cannot so easily be acquitted; Such who are severe observers of other mens waies and actions, and as great neglecters of their own; who are far more glad that they can espy a fault in others, than grieved that it is committed: who presume to look into the breast, and to discover how the Affections, which are the pulse of the soul, do beat and work in every duty. In some they mi like the heat of their Zeal, as too much resembling an high and vehement pulse, whose strength and quickness comes not from

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health, but from a *Feaver*. In others they condemn lukewarmneſs, and indifferency, whoſe affections they judge to be as a weak and ſlow pulſe, or as the ſpring of a Watch that is well nigh down, which *clicks* and moves very faintly. In ſome again, they obſerve an inequallity in their profeſſion, which is accompanied with frequent ſtands and pauſes that they make; like *Aſtmatical* and ſhort-breathed Perſons, they run a while and blow longer, before they can move again. And upon theſe they look with as ſad a countenance as a Phyſitian doth upon his Patient that hath a falſe and intermitting pulſe. Few or none can be found to eſcape their cenſure, who obſerve the failings of others, as ſome ancient *Criticks* did the imperfect Verſes of *Homer*, which they learned by heart, not at all regarding the many good. But what can be more contrary to the Law and rule of Chriſtianity than ſuch practices? How many *Prohibitions* are gone out of the Court of Heaven to ſtay ſuch irregular proceedings? Are we not by Chriſt forbid to *judge that we be not judged?* To judge nothing before the time untill the Lord come? And yet what if any man could know the true temper of the affections of others, as fully as a Phyſitian can

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distinguish a well and a sick pulse, would this knowledge be any advantage unto him while he is both ignorant and regardless of his own estate? would he thereby find such joy and comfort in himself, as he that by an impartial examination of himself can discover the truth and sincerity of his own heart to Christ, though he can say nothing of others? Surely this man, as the *hungry*, would be filled with good things, when the other, as the *rich*, should be sent empty away. He, as the humble *Publican*, would be justified, when the other, as the proud *Pharisee*, should be condemned. Let others then, Physitian-like, study the condition of others, I shall look upon it as my duty, and make it my work, not to find out what others are, but what I am in regard of my unfained love and affection unto Christ, who hath transcendently merited my love, though I am wholly unworthy of his. *Erasistratus* is famed in History for discovery of the love of *Antiochus* to his Mother-in-law which shame forced him to conceal, by the motion of his pulse, which he observed to move differently in her presence from what it did at other times. O how happy should I deem my self if I could find the pulse of my affections alwaies working more quick

quick and lively in me whenever I behold my Saviour present in the feast of love, in which he is pleased not only to let me see him, but to enjoy him; or when I hear his name mentioned in a duty, or when I read his name written in his Word, which is therefore the sweeter because his name is so often in it; but I have cause to be ashamed at the uneven temper of my heart, which discovers it self in those intermissions of love & affection that I too often labour under; how often am I chill & cold in the same duty? At what poor trifles do I often stick, when my love to him should blush at the name of difficulty? Can I ever do, or suffer, for him too much, whose perfections render him wholly uncapable of being loved too much? If I were Melted in the Flames and Ardors of Divine Love, might I not say still there are degrees and intentions of heat which I want, and others have? Christians should be the *rivals* of *Seraphims*; whose Name expresseth them to be of a flaming Nature, and whose Imployment, in *Isaiahs* Mysterious Vision, is to cry one to another, *holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts*: he is the object to which those Flames that warm them do aspire and tend. O that my heart, like the Prophets Lips, were touched by some

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Seraphim, that I might love Chriſt, which is the beſt of Duties, with an heart flaming with the Fire of Heavenly Love, which is the beſt of tempers.

Meditation XLV.

Upon a Bee-hive and a Waſpes neſt.

THoſe two *Inſects* have, as the *Naturaliſts* obſerve, a likeneſs in ſundry Particulars: The *Waſpes* have one common habitation, as well as the *Bees*, and are under the Goverment of a King; who, as the King of Bees, is the largeſt, and moſt beautiful among them: In the Building of their Cells and Combs they are exact, and make them much like to the Bees both for their *figure* and *ſize*: But they make no *Honey* at all, nor yet any *Wax* that is for ſervice; they live only upon Rapine, and are injurious to moſt kind of fruits; like Thieves they enter by force into the Hives of Bees and devour the Honey which hath with much induſtry been gathered by them. So eager are they after

what

what is sweet, as that any narrow-mouthed glass set near the Hive with a little sweet liquor becomes a snare to drown and destroy them, and a security to the Bees to prevent their Theft, which pass the more freely into their Cells, not tempted to endanger their lives, or to neglect their Work by the sight of such a pleasing bait. And now whither my thoughts carry me, who cannot easily conjecture? is there not a double Polity, or Society of Men, the one of which may justly be resembled to Wasps, and the other to Bees? It was *Tertullians* saying long since, *Faciunt favos & vespæ, faciunt Ecclesias Marcionitæ*: Wasps make Combs, but they are empty ones; and so Hereticks make Churches, but they are void of Truth, which is that sweet Honey that is to be found onely amongst the Assemblies of the Faithful. What else is the Church of *Rome*, notwithstanding all those pretences which it makes of being a *Mother-Hive*, but a Nest of Angry Wasps, under the Rule and Sway of a Spiritual *Abaddon*: how many swarms have gone out from thence, not to make Honey, but to destroy what others have made? fraud, robberies, violence have been the things which they have practised, and with which their habitations

bitations have been filled; have they not thurſt their Stings deep into thouſands, who have detected their Impoſtures, and have endeavoured to keep the Myſtery of the Faith in a pure Conſcience? Have they not waſted many places, which were like the Garden of the *Spouſe* full of precious fruits, into which her beloved might come, and eate of his honey and honey-comb? who can expreſs the rage and ſcorn, with which they have trampled upon thoſe, that durſt not abett their impieties? how fond and fruitleſs then muſt the attempts of thoſe be, who as if they had forgotten what *Amaleck* had done, are ſetting on foot overtures of Peace, and termes of Accommodation between *Proteſtancy* and *Popery?* as if the diſtances between the one and the other were more ſeeming than real, and might as readily be brought together as the two extreams of a Serpent, who can, when he pleaſeth, caſt himſelf into a Circle, and take his Tail into his Mouth? But who knoweth not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; and ſo will a little Error diffuſe its poyſon through the whole body of truth, like a drop of oyl on Cloath, it no ſooner falls than ſpreads; like a ſpark on Tinder it catcheth, and runs at once. And therefore

fore *Paul* would not for one hour give place unto falſe Brethren, leſt the Truth of the Goſpel might be endangered. To do it then with the leaſt prejudice to Truth is ſinful; and to effect it without it, is impoſſible. Sooner may they reconcile *Antipathies* in Nature, than in Religion: When therefore they have combined Fire and Water, without extinction of each other, and made an amity between the *Dove* and the *Hawk*, between the *Waſp* and the *Bee*, ſo that the one ſhall not infeſt the other; then may they promiſe themſelves ſucceſs, in making up the breaches between *Babylon* and *Zion*. But, O that they who are ſo ſtudious to make ſtrife to ceaſe between the *Philiſtines* and the *Iſraelites*, would bend their Minds to heal the Diviſions of *Iſrael*, among whom there are great thoughts and ſearchings of heart. Is it not pity to ſee the induſtrious Bees, whoſe Labours are ſo uſeful to their owner, to make a War in the Mouth of their Hive, and to kill one another by thoſe Stings with which they ſhould defend their Cels againſt Waſps and Drones? and is it not then a ſad ſpectacle to behold Chriſtians who ſhould be joyned together, *fidei vinculo, glutine Charitatis*, by the Bond and Cement of Faith and Love, to be divided

vided one from another, and in Animoſities to draw the Sword, and to ſheath it alſo in the Bowels of each other? And yet ſuch heats there have ſometimes been, and ſtill are between Brethren. I could methinks give way to my Sorrow and let it overflow the Banks, to ſee Profeſſors to be leſs tender of Chriſts Body, than the Souldiers were of his Coat; and few or none to prize that Unity which is the Glory of the Faith of the Goſpel. Have we not all one Father, God bleſſed for ever? have we not all one Elder Brother, Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Firſt-Born of every Creature? are we not all quickned by one Spirit, who is a Spirit of Love? are we not all under one Solemn Vow of Baptiſm, in which we have dedicated our ſelves to Gods Service as his Souldiers? how can we then turn Enemies one to another? O God do thou, who haſt made that bleſſed Promiſe of giving thy People one Heart, and one Way, put into them a Spirit of *Wiſedom* and *Love*, that they may walk Wiſely to thoſe that are Without, and Lovingly one towards another; that by this all Men may know that they are Chriſts Diſciples, and believe that thou haſt ſent him.

Meditation

Meditation XLVI.

Upon Contentment and Satisfaction.

IT is our Saviours Maxim, that *Mans life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.* If there be any happiness upon Earth, it is in that we call *Contentation*, which cometh from the *Minde within*, and not from *the things without.* Perfect *Satisfaction* is to be had only in Heaven, where we shall be happy, not by the *Confinement*, but by the *Fruition* of our desires: Then (saith *David*) *I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.* How happy therefore is every Godly Mans Condition, who are the only Persons that are instructed in the Mystery of Contentment while they live on Earth, and shall be in Heaven the sole Possessors of perfect and everlasting Blessedness? True it is, that *Philosophy* hath greatly prized, and earnestly sought this rich Jewel of Contentation; but *Christianity* hath only found it. The *Morallists* have exercised their Wits in giving of Rules to attain it, and have let fall some

ſome Sentences that may deſerve to be put in the Chriſtians *Regiſter*, but they could never look into the true Grounds from whence ſound Contentment doth ariſe, and upon which it is to be built. The higheſt of their *Precepts* have not (as I may ſay) the root of the Matter in them, and are therefore inſufficient wholly to compoſe the Minde, to ſuch a Calm and Even Temper, as may, in the variety of Changes, ſhew and diſcover its ſelf to be ſo reconciled to its preſent Condition, as not to loſe its Inward Peace and Serenity, whatſoever Storms and Croſs Accidents are from without. What are the Conſiderations which they preſcribe as a ſupport againſt Poverty, Sickneſs, Impriſonment, loſs of Friends, Baniſhment, and ſuch like Evils? are they not Perſwaſions drawn from the Dignity of *Man*, from the vanity and uncertainty of all *outward things*, from the ſhortneſs and frailty of *Life*, from the befalling of the ſame things unto others? But alas! what ſlender Props are theſe to bear the ſtreſs and weight of thoſe Armies of Trials, which at once may aſſault the Life of Man? Theſe may haply ſerve as ſecondary helps to alleviate the bitterneſs of ſome Afflictions, when we are apt to think them greater than what others have felt,

or

or longer than what others have endured: But to keep the Mind in Peace in the midſt of all æſtuations from without, there muſt be more Effectual Remedies, than either *Nature* or *Morality* can ſuggeſt. From whence then can true Contentment ariſe but from *Godlineſs*, which hath a *Sufficiency* to eſtabliſh the Heart? it is that alone which bringeth a Man home to God, out of whom neither Contentment, nor Satisfaction can ever be had. It is that which acquainteth a Man with that great Secret, of Gods *Special Providence* over his Children, who Rules the World, not only as a Lord, to make them ſenſible of his *Power*, but as a loving Father to make them confident of his *goodneſs*, whereby he diſpoſeth all things for the beſt. O when Faith hath once apprehended this, how firmly can it reſt upon the Promiſes which are made to Godlineſs, both of this life and that which is to come? How can it work far more Contentation with the meaneſt *Food*, than others have with the coſtlieſt *Delicates*; with the pooreſt *Raiment*, than others have with their richeſt *Ornaments*? It is Faith only that teacheth a Chriſtian, like a skilful *Muſician*, to let down a String a Peg lower, when the Tune requires it; or like an experienced *Spagyrick*, to remit,

or

or intend his Furnace as occasion serves. Such an one was *Paul*, who learned this heavenly Art, not at *Gamaliels feet*, but in *Christs School*, the Holy Spirit of God being his Teacher; so that he knew both how to want and how to abound, and in whatsoever State he was, therewith to be content. Let none then so far admire those Heathen Sages, in those speculations of theirs concerning this Mystery, as if they had attained to hit that Mark at which they levelled, and had arrived at the utmost boundaries of it. When as in all their Essayes, they have fallen as far short of true Contentation, as Sick Mens *Slumbrings* and Dreams, do of a sound and healthful Rest. Of all their *Precepts* and *Rules*, I may say as *Erasmus* did of *Seneca*, in an Epistle of his, *Si legas eum ut paganum, scripsit Christianè; si ut Christianum, scripsit paganicè*; If you read them as the Sayings of Heathens, they speak Christianly; but if you look upon them as the Sayings of Christians, they speak Paganly. And how could it be that they should ever do otherwise? they being wholly destitute of the *Light of Grace*, and the *Guidance of the Spirit*, which are both requisite to this high and holy Learning? the one as a *Principle*, and the other as a *Teacher*. But yet this I

must

muſt ſay alſo, that they have done enough to ſhame many; who, enjoying the Benefit of *Divine Revelation*, and living in the open Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, have profited thereby in ſo ſmall a Proportion beyond them. Who can forbear bluſhing to ſee thoſe who Profeſs to be Chriſtians, to live ſo contrary to the Law and Rule which they ſhould walk by? to ſeek contentment not by *moderating their deſires*, but by *ſatisfying* them, which will ſtill *encreaſe*, as things *come on*: like to Rivers, which the more they are fed, and the farther they run, the wider they ſpread. Can it rationally be deemed by any, that thoſe things which are *Summes* in the *deſire*, and *Cyphers* in the *fruition*, ſhould ever effect contentedneſs in the minde? Is not the deficiency that Men ſee in their abundance, the ground of their Multiplying it? and can they ever, by the Additions which they make, heal its deficiency? why then ſhould any try and attempt ſuch fruitleſs projects, which cannot but end in diſappointment? Methinks, I ſhould not need to expoſtulate the matter with Chriſtians: That anointing which teacheth them all things, ſhould inſtruct them in this, that Godlineſs is the only way to *Contentment* in this life, and *ſatisfaction* in the other. But Lord, however others

live,

live, help me to bring my Minde to my Condition, which is as well my duty as my happineſs, while I am on earth; and to reſt aſſured, that in Heaven thou wilt bring my Eſtate to my Minde, which is, that I may enjoy thee, in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.

Meditation XLVII.

Upon the Perching of a piece of Cloth.

LAws, ſignally good, oft-times derive their birth according to the common Saying, from evil Manners, ſpringing like fair and beautiful Flowers, from a black and deformed Root: And ſo likewiſe the many and ingenious Explorations of finding out the difference between things of worth and their Counterfeits; and of ſeeing into the particular defects of Commodities, have been occaſioned from the multiplicity of deceits, which have riſen either from natural ſemblances, or corrupt Practiſes. The skilful *Lapidary* hath, by his obſer-

obſervation, learned to know a falſe *Stone* from a true, which the common Eye cannot diſtinguiſh. The *Herbaliſts* do difference *Plants* ſometimes by the Root, ſometimes by the Taſte, when the likeneſs of the Leaf is perfectly the ſame. The *Cautious* Receiver, that he be not couzened by adulterated *Coyn* for *true*, makes an *Artificial Touchſtone* of his Senſes, he *bends* it, he *rings* it, he *rubs* it, and *ſmells* to it, that thereby he may finde out what it is: The circumſpect *Merchant* contents not himſelf with the ſeeing and feeling of his *Cloth*, as it lies made up, but he puts it upon the *Perch*, and ſetting it between the light and himſelf, draws it leaſurely over and ſo diſcovers, not only the rents and holes that are in it, but the inequality of the threds, the unevenneſs of its ſpinning, the ſpots and ſtains that are in it, and what not, that may make it either to be rejected for its defects, or approved for its goodneſs. O how impartial a Judge is light, which neither flatters friends, nor wrongs enemies; which manifeſts the good as well as the evil, to what ever it is applyed? This kinde of trial hints to me the beſt manner of doing that work, which every Chriſtian ought to perform with the greateſt care, the ſearching and examining of

his

his own wayes. I may learn from what is done to the Cloth, to do the same Spiritually to my self, by setting my actions between the light of the Word, and the Discerning power of Conscience, that so the one may discover, and the other may judge what their rectitude or pravity is? and this is best done, when every parcel of the Conversation is looked into, and scanned, as the Cloth that is drawn over the Perch; then it is that I finde the unevenness of my Duties, the distractions of my Thoughts, and the unbelief of my Heart, which runs as a continued Thread, from one end of the Duty unt othe other. Then it is that I espy those secret stains of Hypocrisie, which discolour my services, and blemish them to God. when they seem fair to the eye of Man; Then it is that, convinced of my filthiness, I cry out, My *Person* wants a *Priest*, which is deformed with infinite *guilt*, that without him cannot be covered: My *Nature* wants a *Priest*, which is over-run with an universal *lepresie*, that without him cannot be cured: My *Sins* want a *Priest*, which are for their number as the sands, and for their greatness as the Mountains, that without him can never be pardoned: My *holy things* want a *Priest*, which are defiled with the daily Eruptions of

ſin and folly, that without him can never be accepted. And who is it that thus vieweth himſelf by this perfect Law of Liberty, that is not thus affected? What ſaith *Paul* of himſelf? *I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came ſin revived, and I died*: Who was once more full of conceited abilities to perform the Righteouſneſs of the Law without blame? Who was more preſumptuous in ſelf-Juſtification, and elated thoughts of his Perfection, than the *Apoſtle*, while he was without the Law? that is, not without the *Letter*, but without the *Spiritual ſenſe* and penetrative power of it; but when the Commandment came in its Vigour and Life, how ſuddenly did all thoſe miſ-perſwaſions of his own Righteouſneſs, vaniſh into nothing? He then loſt his confidence of being Saved by his obedience to the Law; and by the light of it diſcovered thoſe inward Luſtings, and deſires to be ſinful, and ſuch as ſubjected him unto Death, which before were wholly neglected and unſeen. As I would therefore incite Chriſtians, to an exact diſcuſſion of their waies, ſo would I alſo direct them to look upon them through no other *medium*, than the Light of the Word: *Wherewith* (ſaith *David*) *ſhall a young Man cleanſe his waies* (or

as

as the the Original imports, make clear as Cryſtal) *by taking heed thereto according to thy Word?* The Heathen were not altogether Aliens to this Duty of Self-Examination; it was *Sextius* his cuſtome, as *Seneca* reports it, when he betook himſelf to his Nights Reſt, to queſtion his Soul, *Quod hodie malum tuum ſanâſti? cui vitio obſtitiſti?* What Malady haſt thou this day cured? What vice haſt thou withſtood? It was alſo *Pythagoras* his counſel to his Scholars, that each Man ſhould demand of himſelf, *Wherein have I offended? What good have I done?* But alas! how confuſed and in-diſtinct was that light, by which they made this ſearch? How little can the Candle-light of Nature diſcover of the evil of Sin, whoſe Rules and Principles do ſo much fall in, and ſute with the wills of the Fleſh? What *Camel Sins* did the very beſt of them ſwallow down, without the leaſt ſtraining at them? What ſwarms are there of ſins, which Chriſtians complain of, that the Natural Man is totally ignorant of, and can no more diſcover, without the aid of the Word, than the Eye can diſcern its own Blood-ſhed without the help of a Glaſs? We have *Pauls* own confeſſion in this particular; *I had not known luſt, except the Law had ſaid, thou ſhalt not covet.* Before

he only ſaw ſome ſins that were as *beams* for their magnitude, but now he is ſenſible of the ſmalleſt *motes*. To the Law then, and to the Teſtimony do you betake your ſelves, O ye ſincere and upright ones, when you go about this Work! fear not its Purity, but love it; ſhrink not at its Searching Power, but yield up your ſelves to a free and voluntary admiſſion of its light; yea, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, that by the Light of the Word, ye can trace ſin home unto its receptacle, and can both judge it and mortifie it in the ſeed and root of it, which is the ſureſt and beſt way of deſtroying it. He is amongſt the First-born of Chriſtians, who communes moſt with his own heart, and looks oftenest into the Books of Conſcience, which Writes *Journals*, and not *Annals*, and is moſt likely to obtain a double Portion, both of *Peace* and *Grace*; but when he hath done all, let him make *Davids* Prayer the cloſe; *Search me, O Lord, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts, and ſee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting.*

Meditation

Meditation XLVIII.

Upon the ſight of a Grave newly made.

IT is happily no pleaſing ſight, but queſtionleſſe very profitable, to look ſometimes into *the houſe appointed for all living*, as holy *Job* calls the *Grave*. Though nothing leſſe than beauty can be ſeen which may delight the *Eye*, yet much may be beheld that may paſſionately affect the *heart*. The thoughts which it ſuggeſted to me were like unto the *Cloud* that was between the Camp of the *Egyptians* and the Camp of *Iſrael*, which had both a dark and bright ſide: The one caſts down, and the other raiſeth up, but both are uſeful. My *dark* and *ſad* thoughts ſprang from the conſideration of the *entry* of death, which came into the world by ſin; it is ſin that hath made all the *Funerals* that ever have been. In our Creation, death had neither *matter* in us, nor *right* over us: Our Innocency was free of any *neceſſity* of death. As God made us living Creatures, ſo his power was able to ſuſtain us *immortal* creatures; we had bodily life by our ſoul in our body, and ſpi-

ritual life by Gods Image in both, but ſin brought on us death of all ſorts: Death *ſpiritual*, in the loſs of Gods Image, death *bodily*, in the begun Corruption of our body, and death *eternal*, in the endleſs ruine of both. And whom would not this ſingle thought afflict with dread and ſorrow, to ſee what a change ſin hath made in the condition of man? If *Adam* would have lived without ſin, he might have lived without end: But now by his credulous receiving the Serpents Poyſon, *Death* is glued to our nature, neceſſity of evil to the *freedome* of our *will*, and all *miſery* to *our ſelves*. Another dark and poſing thought did ariſe from the *progreſs* of death, which keeps no order or method. It thruſts its ſickle not only into the ripe *corn*, but the green *blade*; it nips the *bloſſome*, as well as gathers the *fruit*; it diſſolves the knot that was but new made, between the ſoul and the body, as well as that which age and years had confirmed. There were, I obſerved, *skulls* of all *Sizes*: There were ſome who had never ſeen the Sun to paſs from one *Tropick* to the other: Others there were whoſe life could not be reckoned by *daies*, or *hours*, but by *minutes*; they dropt only from the *Womb* to the *Grave*. And is not this amongſt the ſecrets of God, that thouſands

ſands ſhould thus paſs through the world, and be determined to different Eſtates for Eternity? What can I ſay? But that *the waies of God are unſearchable, and his Judgements paſt finding out.* As it now ſhews his Soveraignty, thus to deal with his Creatures as it pleaſeth him; ſo the Great Day will manifeſt the wiſdome and Juſtice of God that is wrapt up in theſe myſterious providences. He that is the Judge of all, will be found to be righteous towards all. A third ſad thought, *the conſuming power of the Grave* did ſtir up within me, ſo that I was ready to ſay, *Can theſe dry bones live?* Can theſe mingled duſts be diſtinguiſhed? Can the duſts that are ſcattered into diſtances be ever united? Doth not the *Noble* and the *Baſe*, the *Saint* and the *Sinner*, lye equally under the power of corruption? Who then would not dread to deſcend into the Grave, and make *Hamans* queſtion, *Will God ſhew wonders to the dead, ſhall the dead ariſe and praiſe him?* But when I conſider, that Believers in their aſcending into heaven, do only let fall their bodies to the earth, as *Elijah* dropt his Mantle, when he was taken up, and that their Spirits return to God that gave them. That Death ſtriketh not on the *New man*, but on the *Tabernacle* which is a common Lodging,

both to Fleſh and Spirit, my fears are greatly Alleviated: for who is much ſolicitous for the Cabinet when the Jewel is ſafe? Yea, when I think that death, which ſeparates our perſons from the world, our ſoul from the body, and every part of our body from another, cannot diſſolve our Union with Chriſt; but that then we ſleep in him, and ſhall be raiſed by him, and conformed to him, as the pattern of our glory. O how do theſe moſt radiant thoughts diſpel both the *black fears* of death, and the *lightſome comforts* of the world, as the riſing Sun makes the bright ſtars of heaven to vaniſh, as well as the dark *ſhades* of the night? How little then doth the love of this life, or the difficulties of death abate the deſires of a Believer, *to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt, which is far better?* Who can wonder at old *Simeons* importunity, to depart in peace, when his eyes had ſeen the ſalvation of God, and his arms imbraced it? Who would not be of the ſame minde, that hath once taſted of the Cluſters of the heavenly *Canaan*, to long after the full Vintage? How pathetical is that of *Auſtin* upon Gods anſwer to *Moſes*, *Thou canſt not ſee my face, for no man can ſee me and live?* Who replies with great confidence, Lord, is that all, that I cannot ſee thy face and live?

Eia

Eia Domine, moriar, ut te videam; videam, ut hic moriar; nolo vivere, volo mori, diſſolvi cupio, & eſſe cum Chriſto. I pray thee Lord then let me dye, that I may ſee thy face: Or let me ſee thee that I may dye in this place. I would not live, I would dye, I deſire to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt. Thus alſo have other Saints been affected, who have had death in deſire, and life in patience. O what a ſtrange change then hath Chriſt made in *Death* and the *Grave*, and his grace in the *heart* and affections of Believers? Death, which ſin brought into the world, is now become the only means to deſtroy and kill ſin. Death, which is only contrary unto life, is now turned into a *Port* and paſſage into life: So that when we paſs out of this life, we loſe neither life nor being, but are admitted to a more glorious life and being than ever we had. Death, that before was an armed *Enemy*, is now made a reconciled and firm *friend*; a *Phyſician* to cure all our diſeaſes; and an *Harbinger* to make way for glory. The Grave alſo, by Chriſts lying in it, is become a *bed of reſt*, in which his Saints fetch a ſhort *ſlumber* until he awaken them to a glorious Reſurrection. It is the Chamber into which he invites his beloved ones, to hide themſelves until his indignation be paſt; the *Ark*, into which he

ſhuts his *Noahs*, whileſt he deſtroyes the world with an overflowing deluge of his wrath and diſpleaſure. And therefore it is, that by his grace they are not afraid to meet Death, which others would ſhun; and make it as a voluntary *offring* unto God, which others pay only as a *neceſſary debt*. Yea, they eſteem it as one of the choiſeſt Jewels in that exact *Inventory*, that *Paul* hath made of the riches of Believers, and next unto Jeſus Chriſt, bleſſe God for it, as the greateſt mercy. O holy Saviour, do thou then who art the Lord both of the dead and of the living, unto whom all ought to live, and all ought to dye, enable me thy ſervant to love thee above life, which of all bleſſings is the *ſweeteſt*, and to hate *ſin* above death, which of all evils is the *bitteреſt* to nature: that ſo I may have this teſtimony of the power of thy grace in the change of my heart, that for the enjoyment of perfect Communion with thee I can gladly loſe my life, and be ſeparated from ſin, can willingly undergo death, which is of all evidences the Cleareſt.

Meditation XLIX.

Upon a Spring in an high ground.

THe additional bleſſing, which *Achſah* ſought of *Caleb* her Father was Springs of water for her ſouth or dry land, who gave her the upper and the nether Springs: If the diſtinct recording of this particular in Scripture carry any thing of importance with it, is it not that he gave her ſome portion of Land that was well watered, as the low valleys for the moſt part are? And that he gave alſo ſuch Springs that by their high lying were apt to convey their ſtream to the inriching of other parts that ſtood in need of ſuch helps to make them fruitful. Now what is it that can more commend a Spring, than a free diffuſion of its waters, and the ſpreading of its moiſture, not onely to grounds that are near, but to ſuch as are at a diſtance from it, and what can more conduce unto this commodious uſefulneſs than the Springs *riſe* from ſome hill, or place of aſcent? *another Spring* may haply ſerv to water ſome little ſpot of ground, to benefit ſome private Garden, but an *upper Spring* will great-

greatly advantage a large *Inheritance*. Such a like difference methinks there is in the *moral* Well-ſprings of grace and holineſs, as is between the *natural*, according to the diverſity of Subjects in which they are ſeated. *Grace* in a poor man is as a *nether ſpring*, which is not leſs uſeful through a defect of water, but through an incapacity to make any large communication of it, in regard of thoſe circumſtances in which he ſtands: His *wants*, his *paucity* of Friends, the *little notice* the world takes of him, the *ſlightings* that Poverty expoſeth moſt men unto, are all great obſtacles to the *eternal* diffuſions of his grace, though not to his *intrinſecal* fulneſs of it. But grace in a great Perſon is like an *upper Spring*, which may convey it ſelf far and near, becauſe of the many advantages which he hath above others: His Counſels will be ſooner hearkened unto, his Reproofs will over-awe more, his Converſation will win more, his Example having the force of a Law. So willing have many been to make Greatneſs their pattern, as that they have imitated their infirmities. *Dionyſius* his Courtiers affected to ſeem to be purblind, and juſtle one againſt another, that ſo they might be like their Prince. *Alexanders* Followers would imitate him

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in their geſture, and go as if their ſhoulders were one higher than the other, becauſe there was ſome inequality in his. Among the *Perſians* they were wont highly to eſteem a long and narrow head, and were induſtrious to faſhion the heads of their new-born Infants to ſuch a ſhape, becauſe ſome of their Kings heads were of that figure. O what pity is it then that greatneſs and goodneſs ſhould ever be out of Conjunction together, or be as Stars of a different Hemiſpheer, that are never ſeen ſhining at the ſame time? Yea, why ſhould not thoſe who are the higheſt among men affect alſo to be the beſt, that ſo they might bring a beauty and ſhine into the world, that they might allure others not onely to behold it, but alſo to imitate it, by conforming themſelves to their happy example? It is the ſaying of *Plutarch*, that rare Moraliſt, That God is angry with them that counterfeit his Thunder and Lightning, his Scepter and his Trident, and his Thunderbolts he would not have any to meddle with: He loves not that any ſhould imitate him in abſolute Dominion & Soveraignty: But he delights to ſee them darting forth thoſe amiable & cheriſhing beams of Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Clemency. Without theſe things

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be conveyed down unto others by those who have the reines of Power and Government in their hands, though they look upon themselves as Gods on earth, yet they are as unlike to the God of heaven as a blazing *Comet* is to a bright and glorious Sun, or a deceitful *Glow-worm* to an heavenly *Star*. What low thoughts *Solomon* himself hath of Soveraignty when put into an ill hand, we may read in his Book of the *Preacher*, where he tells us, that *better is a poor and a wise Child, than an old and foolish King who will not be instructed*, to manage his power and authority for the good of those that are under him. It is wisdom that makes a mans face to shine, but most of all those that are in highest places: Good in them is most conspicuous, and both more applauded and Imitated than in others. What evil cannot a King forbid, *whose wrath is as the roaring of a Lion?* What good can he not encourage, *whose favour is as a cloud of the latter rain*, which promiseth an harvest of blessings? I cannot but wonder at the great changes which the Scripture reports to have been made by godly Princes, in the midst of a general Apostacy, suth as *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Ezekiah*, *Josiah* who purged the Land from spreading Idolatry, and restored Sabbaths,

Ordi-

Ordinances, and Temple-Worſhip to their power and purity; who have bowed the hearts of the people towards them, like to the top of a fiſhers Angling rod, this way or that way as it pleaſeth them. Who but Princes that had grace in their hearts and power in their hands, could have ever effected ſuch things as might well ſeem to be of inſuperable difficulty? O that I could therefore ſuggeſt ſuch Conſiderations that might prevail with all whoſe conditions God hath raiſed above others, to be accordingly inſtrumental in the doing of good to others that move in a lower ſphere. Shall I ſay, God expects it from you? If I do, it is no other than what himſelf hath ſpoken, when he ſaith, *He will get him up to the great men, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the Judgment of their God.* Or ſhall I ſay, God ſignally commands it from you above others? Is it not to you that he particularly calls? *Be wiſe now O ye Kings, be inſtructed, ye Judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling, kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way.* Do you think, that greatneſs doth rather exempt from, than oblige to obedience? or that you ſhall have a more favourable Audit at the laſt day, when every man muſt give

an account of himself unto God? Be not deceived, God will enquire what you have done more for him above others, as he hath for you above thousands; and wo be unto you if you be found too light. Your Exaltation in this life will serve only to make your casting down to be the more dismal in the other, and to confirm the truth of that Proverb, *Inferni pavimentum fit ex magnatum galeis, Sacerdotum capitibus*; That Hell is paved with the Corslets of Noblemen, and the skulls of Priests.

Meditation L.

Upon the Vanity of Wishes.

TRue and perfect happiness is a good which neither the light of Nature can discover, nor its endeavours obtain; it being as impotent to the acquiring of it, as it is blind to the beholding of it. And yet there is nothing in which man less apprehends himself at a loss than in this, of fully contriving at least, if not effecting his own happiness. Who is it that is not confident, that if he might have the liberty of his options to wish

wish whatever he would, and to have it turned into realities for him; but that he could readily frame to himself a condition as full of happiness, as the Sun is of light, or the Sea of water? What poor and contemptible thoughts would he have of all that glory of the World which the devil shewed to Christ as a bait, when he tempted him to the worst of sins to those stately Schemes and representations, which he could suppose to be the objects of his delight? If wishes were the measure of happiness, what is it that the boundless imagination of man would not suppose and desire? What strange changes would he forthwith make in the Universe, in levelling of Mountains, in raising of Valleys, in altering of Climates and Elements themselves? Happily he might wish that the Sea were turned into a delicious bath, in which he might sport himself without any fear of drowning; that the Rocks were as so many polished Diamonds; the Sands as so many fair Pearls to beautifie it, and the Islands as so many retiring houses of pleasure to betake himself unto when he pleaseth. He might wish that all the Trees of the earth were as the choisest plants of Paradise, every one of which might at his beck bow down their branchs,

and

and tender their ripe fruit unto him. And thus may he multiply his wiſhes, until every ſpire of Graſs and every duſt of the earth have undergone ſome remarkable mutation according to the luſt of his fancy, and yet be as far from any ſatisfaction in his deſires, or reſt in his thoughts, as the Apes in the Fable were from warmth, which finding a Glow-worm in a cold night, gathered ſome ſticks together, and blew themſelves breathleſs to kindle a little fire. For, all theſe ſuppoſed gaieties are not the *perfection* but the *diſeaſe* of fancy, which hath (as I may ſo ſpeak) a *Bulimia*, in reſpect of objects, as ſome corrupt and vitiated appetites have in reſpect of meates, who though they eat much are yet never ſatisfied. And hence it is, that men who enjoy plenty, and are far from having any juſt cauſe to complain of want, do yet, as unſatisfied perſons, feed themſelves with fond ſuppoſitions of being in ſuch an eſtate and condition of which they can have no poſſibility, much leſs any real hope for to obtain. The ambitious man pleaſeth himſelf in thinking how bravely he could King it, if he were but ſet upon a Throne, and how far he would out-ſtrip all other Princes that have been before him both for ſtate and glory; he fancies what

what pleasures he would have for his recreation, what meats for his Table, what persons for his attendants, what Laws for his Government; and then, *Absolom* like, he wisheth in himself, *O that I were made a Judge in Israel.* The Covetous person, whose heart is set upon Riches, never ceaseth in the midst of his abundance to desire more. *Riches* and his *desires* still keep at a distance; as they come on, so do his desires come on too, the one can never overtake the other, no more than the hinder wheels of a Coach can overtake the former. If he should, as *Peter*, cast his hook into the Sea, and take up the fish that first cometh up, with a Stater or peice of money in his mouth, how eagerly straitwaies would he wish to take a second, and then a third, yea, how would he still renew his wishes, so as sooner to empty the Sea of all its fish, than to satisfie his desires with accumulated treasures. But are these, O vain men, the highest wishes with which you would impe your present enjoyments, and so make your speedy flight unto perfect happiness? What if all these suppositions and wishes, which are (as I may so speak) the creations of fancy, were real existency? Yea, what if your condition did as far exceed the pomp of all humane

Imagi-

Imagination, as *Solomon* did the fame th
was spread abroad of him? Might I n
yet say, as *David* did, *O ye Sons of men, h*
long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing
Are these things for which Angels w
give you the right hand of fellowship? C
will this glory make them stoop to b
come ministring spirits unto you? Thou
you may conceive as highly of your selv
as the Prince of *Tyrus* did of himself, w
said *he was a God*, and sat in the seat
God; yet they will look upon you
better than gilded dust and ashes. Th
which they adore, and with wonder lo
into, is not the happiness of the *Work*
lings, but of *believers*, who are blessed, n
according to what they ask or desire, b
far above whatever could have entred int
the thoughts of men and Angels to co
ceive. Who could ever have said to God,
Haman did to *Ahasuerus*, if he had been as
ed, *What shall be done to the man whom G*
delighteth to honour? Let the foundation a
corner-stone of his happiness, be laid in t
exinanition of the Son of God, let hi
come from heaven to earth to purchase
with his blood: let his nature be dignifie
by being personally united unto the Divi
Nature; let him be a co-heir with him wh

is the brightneſſe of his Fathers glory, ſit with him upon the ſame Throne, and be conformed to his likeneſſe: let him ſtand for ever in the higheſt and ſweeteſt relations unto the three moſt glorious Perſons, having God to be his *Father*, his Son to be his *Elder Brother*, and the Holy Spirit to be his *Friend* and *Comforter*. Are not theſe things ſuch, as may poſe Angels to tell whether is greater, the *wonder* or the *mercy*? May it not be truly ſaid, that Omnipotency it ſelf is exhauſted, ſo that there remains neither power in God to do, nor wiſdome to finde out a greater happineſſe than this, which he hath vouchſafed to man in his loweſt condition? Can there then be any additions made by the narrow conceptions of weak Creatures? Let me therefore expoſtulate with Chriſtians, whoſe happineſſe in Chriſt is compleat; and yet, as if there were an emptineſſe in their condition, are ſtill hankering in their minds after the worlds vanities, and wiſhing, like carnal *Iſraelites*, to eat of the Fleſh-pots and Garlick of *Egypt*, as if the true bread from heaven were not a ſufficient and ſatisfying food. Is there any thing in the world which you cannot finde made up to you in Chriſt? Are not all the ſcattered comforts which can be had only in the

Creatures

Creatures by retail, as being parcelled ou
ſome to one ſome to another, to be had fu
ly in Chriſt, in whom they are ſummed up
as broken particulars are in the foot of a
account? Though he be, *Bonum formaliter
ſimplex*, a good formally ſimple; yet he is
Eminenter multiplex, A good eminently
manifold. And there is no more to be ha
in Chriſt, than can be had any waies out
him; who, as the firſt figure in a number
ſtands for more than all the figures that ca
be added unto it. *Whom*, ſaith holy *David*
*have I in heaven but thee? And there is no
upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Surely
if Heaven, which hath legions of beauti
and perfections in it, yield nothing worth
of his love and affection but God an
Chriſt, we may well conclude, that Earth
which is as void of good, as Heaven is full
can have nothing in it that is to be deſire
by us. Why then ſhould any, in whom Chri
is the hope of glory, be as the men of th
world, who cry out, *Who will ſhew us a
good?* For them to be unſatisfied who ſee
upon vanities, is no wonder; but for tho
who poſſeſſe Him that is, and hath a
things, it is ſtrange that they ſhould ſee
any thing out of him. *Quid ultra quæri
cui omnia ſuus conditor ſit? aut quid ei ſuffi
cit, cui ipſe non ſufficit?* What can he ſee
ſu

further (ſaith *Proſper*) to whom his God is made every thing? Or what will ſuffice him, to whom He is not ſufficient? I know but one wiſh that any Believer hath to make, and that is the wiſh of St. *John*, with which he ſeals up the Book of God, as the common deſire of all the Faithful, with which I ſhall ſhut up this Meditation, as with the beſt of wiſhes: *Come Lord Jeſus*, even ſo come, as thou haſt promiſed,: *come quickly*, in whoſe preſence there is fulneſſe of joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore.

Meditation LI.

Upon the firſt Fruits and Gleanings.

WHat the Apoſtle ſaith of the heavenly Bodies, that one Star differs from another Star in glory, is true alſo of the heavenly *Laws* and Commands of God, as well *Ceremonial* as *Moral*, that they differ from each other in their *weight* and *worth*. Some of which ſet forth the *greater* things, and others the *leſs*; as may be eaſily

fily ſeen in this double Command of *Firſt-*
fruits, and Gleanings; one of which is far
greater than the other, though the leſſe is
not to be neglected, becauſe it is a ſtream
that flows from the ſame Fountain, the
Soveraign Will and appointment of God.
But that we may the better take the Di-
menſions of this Law of *Firſt fruits*, let us
view it by the help of ſome Conſiderations
as Aſtronomers by Inſtruments judge of
the Altitude, and Magnitude of a Star. We
may firſt ſee it in the extent of thoſe things
in the offering of which, God would be
honoured and acknowledged; he required
the firſtlings of Men and Cattel, the firſt fruits
of Trees, and of the Earth, in the ſheaf, and in
the threſhing floor, in the dough, & in the loave.
It did reach to all their ſubſtance; and the
increaſe, which, without this Service, was
but a polluted and an unclean heap.

Secondly, In the ſolemn manner of the
offering of them unto God, which was to
be done with an humble Confeſſion of the
Fathers poverty; *A Syrian ready to perish*
was my Father, and of the hard bondage in
Egypt ſuſtained by them, and with acknow-
ledgement of Gods gracious looking upon
their Affliction, Labour, and Oppreſſion,
bringing them alſo forth with a mighty
hand and out-ſtretched arm, with great
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terribleneſſe, and with ſigns and wonders, and giving them a Land that flowed with milk and honey.

Thirdly, In the expreſs Command for the ſpeedy payment of them: they were not to be *delayed*, much leſs *withheld*; to keep them back was *robbery*, to defer them was *diſobedience*; and rendred them rather to be of the *Gleanings* and *Corners of the field*, which God had appointed to be reſerved for the poor, than of the *firſt Fruits* which he required for himſelf. It was an injury to the *moral* duty which they did teach, of conſecrating to God the firſt and prime of their years, and abilities, which is to him far more acceptable, than all Offerings and Sacrifices whatever; for how could it be, that he who was careleſs of the *Rite* and *Ceremony*, which typified his duty to him, ſhould ever be mindful of doing that which was the marrow and ſubſtance of it. And now when I think that *firſt Fruits* only were the *ſhadow* of our early honouring God, and remembring him in the day of our youth, when all the faculties both of ſoul and body are in their vigour and ſtrength; I cannot but wonder, as well as mourn, to ſee that under the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which teacheth men to deny all ungodlineſs and world-

ly luſts, that thereby they might become a kind of *firſt fruits unto God and the Lamb.* So few make Religion the work of the morning of their Age, and ſo many of the Evening. What elſe is this, but to give the *firſt Fruits* to Satan, and the *Gleanings* to God; To him the fineſt of the *flower*, and to God the *bran?* But tell me, O ye deferrers of holineſs, who make it both the leaſt and laſt work of your lives. Is it only neceſſary to dye to God, and not to live to him? Or is it reaſonable to ſay, as that young man did to his Companion, when he ſaw *Ambroſe* dying, *Tecum viverem, & cum Ambroſio moriar*, I would live with thee, and dye with *Ambroſe?* Is not this to mock God, whom yet you would have to ſave you? And to miniſter matter of triumph to the God of this world, whoſe Captives you have been, that though the God of heaven pay you your wages, yet you have done wholly his work? Unto you therefore, O men, I call, and my voice is unto the Sons of men, be not deceived, God will not be mocked: It is not the owning of him, when you can ſerve neither your ſelves, nor your Luſts any longer, that will be acceptable unto him: It is not a few bed-rid prayers, that are as thoſe Ears of Corn, which *Pharoah* ſaw in his

his dream, withered, thin, and blasted with the East wind, that will expiate those black Crimes, with which your ill-spent life is over spread. Can an Offering of *Gleanings*, which is made up of *robbery*, and *disobedience*, of wronging the poor, and violating the Command of God, ever hallow the whole Harvest? No more can such duties be availing to reconcile you to God, who requires that you should seek him early. Yea, hath he not cursed the deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, and sacrificeth to God a corrupt thing? And what are you but deceivers? Who waste the Lamp of time, that God hath given you to work by, in the sinful delights of the flesh, and *alienate* the chief of your strength and parts, from him that should have been honoured, both with the *first* and *best* of your abilities, and in your Age have nothing to offer to him, but a large be-droll of hainous enormities, which may justly bring down your grey hairs with sorrow unto the grave? How blessed a thing is it then for Men to give to God the *first Fruits* of their Youth, that he may not give them bitter *after-fruits*, and cause them to feel more smart of their sins in their Old Age, than ever they found pleasure or delight in them in their Youth? and what better

Perſwaſions can I ſuggeſt, than to conſider,

Firſt, That early Piety gives both to the *Perſon*, and to his *Services* a peculiar Preheminence and Dignity above all others. The *Naturaliſts* obſerve, that the Pearls that are bred of the Morning Dew, are far more bright and clear, than thoſe which are bred of the Evening Dew: And ſo are thoſe duties of a greater worth and beauty, which are the fruits of a Morning, and not an Evening Godlineſs. It is the commendation of *Hezekiahs* Reformation, above all others of the Kings of *Judah*, that in the firſt year of his Reign, *in the firſt Month, he opened the doors of the houſe of the Lord.* It is that which makes *Joſiahs* Memory to be as a box of precious Nard, that *while he was yet young, he began to ſeek after the God of* David *his Father.* It is an Honourable Teſtimony which *Paul* gives to *Epænetus*, that he was *the firſt Fruits of Achaia unto Chriſt*: and the like is that which he gives to *Andronicus* and *Junia*, that *they were in Chriſt before him*: To have a Precedency in the Faith, is not only a *happineſs*, but a *dignity*. What glory can be greater, than to be a *Jeremiah* ſanctified from the Womb; or a *Timothy* nouriſhed up in the words of Faith?

Secondly,

Secondly, The comfort of Age, is a well-spent Life; When a Man comes to the Grave, as a *Shock of Corn* in its season, and not as a bundle of Tares to the Fire; when the Bones are full, not of the Sins of Youth, but of the Services that were then done to God; when a man can say, as dying *Hezekiah*, *Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* O it is sad, when the sins of youth become the burthen of age! if the Grashopper then be a weight to the Body, what a pressure will heaps of Mountainous sins be to the Soul? Age at the best hath sufficient Griefs; it is of it self a Sickness, and a Neighbour to Death, and needs not the bad provisions of Youthful Follies to make it worse. Let then the Counsel of Wise *Solomon* be acceptable unto you, who are yet in the spring and flower of your age, to *Remember your Creatour in the daies of your youth*; and then if Death make you *Pale*, before Age make you *Grey*, you will have this comfort, that you are old in *hours*, though not in *years*; and have lived *much*, though not *long*; as having lost no time in sowing Seed unto the Flesh, as most do, who make youth a foolish Seed-time to a Mourning Age; and Old-

Age a bitter Harveſt to a fooliſh Youth. Or if your Almond-Tree ſhall flouriſh, and that a more gracious Old Age ſhall ſucceed a gracious Youth, Old Age it ſelf ſhall be followed with a Crown of endleſs Glory.

Meditation LII.

Upon a Rock.

IT is the ſaying of the *Moraliſts*, that Accidents which befal Men have a double handle, by which they may be apprehended; So as that if they be rightly taken, they become not only leſs burthenſome and unpleaſant, but alſo of uſe and advantage to thoſe that ſuſtain them: like bitter Herbs that are by the skil of the Phyſitian turned into a wholſome Medicine. The like may be ſaid of this preſent Subject, that it hath a double aſpect under which it may be repreſented to our Conſideration, each of which will ſuggeſt thoughts far differing one from another, and yet both have their riſe from Scripture. Doth not God bid us *look unto the rock from whence we are hewen, and to the*

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pi from whence we are digged? And then what can it hold out to our view, but the misery of our natural condition, our deadness, deformity, barrenness, and untractableness to any good? Is it not the complaint of the best, that their hearts are Stony & Rocky, and that they are apt to stand it out with God, and not to yield to the Work of his Grace? is there any evil that in their account is more insuperable then a flinty heart? When did *Moses*, who had faith to work many Miracles, most distrust, but when he was to make the Rock to yield Water? though God commanded him to *speak* onely to it; yet, as deeming it unsufficient he *smote* it twice. And yet is it not the Promise of God to take away the stony heart and to give an heart of flesh? And is it not that which I beg, that God would mollify both my *Natural* and *Acquired* hardness, and preserve me from *Judicial* hardness; That so I may not resist *Pharaoh*-like his *Messages*, his *Miracles*, his *Judgements*, and his *Mercies*, and grow worse in stead of being better. I would that God might be a *Rock* to me; but I would be as *Wax* unto him, that so I might be apt to receive Divine impressions from him. It is my sin to be as a Rock to God, unflexible and sooner *Broken* than *Bent*;

But it is my unſpeakable comfort to think that God will be a Rock to me, who ſtand in a continual need of his aid and power, to uphold me: who, if I be not built upon him, cannot ſubſiſt; and if I be not hid in him can have no ſalvation. I cannot therefore but give ſome ſcope and line to my thoughts, that I may the better take in the honey and ſweetneſs that drops from this *Metaphorical* Name of God, who is often ſtiled in Scripture, the *Rock of Iſrael*; the *Rock of Ages*; the *Rock of Salvation*. But here I muſt uſe the help of the *Schooles*, who rightly inform us, that when any thing of the Creature is applyed to God, it muſt be, *viâ remotionis*, by way of remotion; and *viâ eminentiæ*, by way of tranſcendent eminency.

Firſt, by way of *remotion*: All defects and blemiſhes whatſoever are not in the leaſt to be attributed unto him who is abſolutely perfect; as *Heraulds* ſay of *Bearings*, the reſemblance muſt be taken from the beſt of their properties, and not from the worſt. Is a Rock deformed, and of unequal parts? God is the firſt of Beauties, as well as of Beings? and all his attributes are equally infinite; his Juſtice is of as large extent as his Mercy; and his Wiſedom as his Power. Is a Rock unſen-

ſenſible of the ſtraits of thoſe that fly unto it for ſuccour? ſo is not God, who is both a Rock and a Father of *Mercies*. Who can read the expreſſions of his tenderneſs, and not be affected! *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

Is the ſtrength of a Rock intranſient, and fixed in it ſelf, not communicating its vertue to what lyes upon it? So is not the ſtrength of *Iſrael*, who is a *living* and not a *dead* Rock, and gives both life and power to thoſe that are united to him. *I can do all things* (ſaith holy *Paul*) *through Chriſt ſtrengthening me*. Is a Rock barren and can yield no *food*, though it afford *ſhelter?* So is not God, who is a *full ſtore-houſe*, as well as a *free refuge*; a *Sun* as well as a *Shield*.

Secondly, *by way of Eminency*: all perfections whatſoever, either for *degree* or *kind*, which put a worth or value on the Creature, are to be found infinitely more in God. Is a Rock ſtrong, and daſhing in pieces all reſiſtance made againſt it? God is incomparably more: He (ſaith *Job*) *is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who*

hath hardened himſelf againſt him and proſpered? Is a Rock durable, and not ſubject to change, by the many revolutions of Ages that paſs over it? God is far more immutable, his years are throughout all Generations; he is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever: *In the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.* Is the ſhadow of a great Rock deſirable in a weary Land, to bear off the ſcorchings of the Sun, and to revive the fainting Traveller? what a Covert and hiding place then is God, againſt all ſtorms, and heats whatſoever, raiſed either by the rage of Men, or by the Eſtuations of a troubled Conſcience, and fomented by the Malice of Satan? Is a Rock of an awefull aſpect for its height, and apt to work upon the head of him that looks down from the top of it? How great then is God whoſe glory is above the Heavens? whoſe faithfulneſs reacheth unto the Clouds, whoſe righteouſneſs is like the great Mountaines, and whoſe Judgments are a great deep? And now methinks I may ſay to my Soul as *David* did unto his, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? and why art thou diſquieted within me?* Cannot God keep him in perfect peace, whoſe Mind is ſtayed on him? is not he a very preſent help in the times of trouble?

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what evil can befal me, under which his everlasting Armes cannot support me? What Seas of Tryals can overwhelm when God shall set me upon a Rock that is higher than I? As I my self cannot climb it, so neither can my Enemies power ever reach it. A Believer can only be wounded by his own fears; as the Diamond is onely cut by its own dust. *Peter* sunk not till his Faith failed him: if his confidence had risen as the Wind and Billows did, he would have greatly honored his Lord, as his Rock, upon whom he was built, and have been highly commended by him, as he was for the good Confession he made of him.

But, O blessed Saviour, if *Peter* cry out, *Save Master I perish*, how much more shall I, who fall far short of his little Faith? and am apt to fear, not only in the *deep Seas*, but in the *shallow Brooks*; not only when the *Waves roar*, but when the *petty Streams* murmur? Do thou therefore, holy Lord, teach me to know what a Rock thou art, and cause all thy glory to pass before me, as thou didst before *Moses*, that so I may see every attribute of thine, as so many Clefts in the Rock, to which I may run in time of danger, and rejoyce to find how I am compassed about, with thy

power

power, wisdome, faithfulness, and goodness, from whence more sure comfort wil arise, than if a numerous host of *Angels* should pitch their Tents round about me.

Meditation LIII.

Upon a Counterfeit piece of Coyne.

WHat Physitians say of some Diseases, *Illi morbi sunt periculosissimi qui sanitatem Imitantur*; That they are most dangerous, which seem to imitate and come neareſt unto health; may be applyed fitly to adulterous and spurious Coynes, that the greater resemblance and likeness they have to the true and genuine, the more pernicious and destructive they are to the Publick; wasting though insensibly not only private Estates, but the common Treasure and Riches of the Nation. And therefore the falsifying of Coyn, which bears the *Image* or *Arms* of the Prince, as the general Warrant to ratifie the goodness of it, hath been made a Crime of the same Complexion, with the highest

higheſt attempt or act done againſt his *Perſon*; the ſame Capital Puniſhment being inflicted upon him that is found guilty of the one, as is upon him that is guilty of the other. What can be done more to deterr any from ſuch Practiſes, than the loſs of Name, Eſtate, Life, in a gaſtly and ignominious death? and yet theſe ſeverities, which ſhould be as the Boundaries at the foot of the Mountain, to keep all from offending, are inſufficient to reſtrain many whom the love of gain, and the hope of ſecreſie do embolden to run a ſad hazard, that they may enjoy the ſweet. Secrecy in ſinning though in ſome reſpect it extenuate a ſin, as making it leſs *ſcandalous*, and leſs *contagious*; yet it is a powerful attractive to incline to the Commiſſion of a ſin. *Joſephs* Miſtriſs was moſt vehement in her ſolliciting of him to folly, when none of the Men of the houſe were within. The Harlot in the *Proverbs* makes that as her Plea to the Young Man to hearken unto her, *That the good Man is not at home, he is gone a long journey, he hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come at the day appointed.* It was that which put an edge upon the Coveteouſneſs of *Achan*, to take the goodly *Babyloniſh Garment*, the *two hundred ſhekels of Silver, and the wedge*

of

of Gold, that he could do it without the privity of any, ſo that none could charge him with the breach of that ſtrict Command which God had given, of not taking the *accurſed thing*, leſt they make themſelves *accurſed*, and the Camp of *Iſrael accurſed*, and trouble it. Uſually when ſhame and puniſhment are the ſole Motives to deter from ſin; the ſecrecy of doing it, by which both may be declined, ſwayes prevailingly to the commiſſion of it. But how far more preſumptuous are they, who adulterate not the *Coyns* of Princes, but the Truths of God, and ſtamp his Name upon their Inventions, to give a Credit and value unto them? have ſuch workers of iniquity any darkneſs and ſhadow of death where they may hide themſelves? Do they think, that, though Kings cannot diſcover thoſe oft times that violate the Dignities of their Crown, that they alſo can eſcape the knowledge of the Moſt High? or is not he as jealous of his word, which he hath magnified above all his Name, as they are of every piece that carries their Image and Inſcription upon it? hath he not declared himſelf to be againſt thoſe that Propheſie the deceits of their own heart, and uſe their Tongues, and ſay, the *Lord ſaith*? Yea, hath he not de-

denounced the most dreadful of Curses against all *Embasers*, or *Clippers* of his Heavenly Coyn? To the one he threatens all the Plagues that are written in the Word of Truth; and for the other, he shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, out of the holy City, and from the things that are written in the Book of God. Who can read such a Sentence, and not tremble at the thoughts of it? And yet, though God be (as *Bernard* speaks) *Sapiens Nummularius qui non accipiet nummum fractum vel fictum.* a wise Exchanger that will not take Money that is broken, or false; though we cannot mock him, as one Man mocketh another, how many do take a liberty to mint Doctrines and Tenents that have only the *Semblance*, but not the *Purity* and substance of Divine Truth? and upon these they set the Name of God, that they may the more easily deceive the incautious? As *Pompey* built a Theater, *Cum Titulo Templi*, with the Title of a *Temple*: and *Apollinaris* the Heretick a School *Cum Titulo Orthodoxi*, with the Title of Orthodox: What prevalency such Arts in this kinde have had, I would the defections of many Particular Persons, yea of Churches did not abundantly witness; Was not the whole Church of *Galatia* soon removed from

from him that had called them into the Grace of *Chriſt* unto another Goſpel? by their falſe Teachers blending the neceſſity of Circumciſion with the Goſpel? and of Workes with Faith. And did not the *Corrinthians* comply more readily with the falſe Apoſtles than with *Paul? Ye ſuffer, if a Man bring you into bondage, if a Man devour you, if a Man take of you, if a Man exalt himſelf, if a Man do ſmite you on the face.* It is the temper and diſpoſition of moſt to be far more circumſpect and jealous in the concernments of their *Eſtates*, than of their *Faith*: and to uſe both the *ſcale* and the *teſt* to find out falſe and light *Coynes*, when, in matters of Faith, the queſtion is ſeldom made, Whoſe Image and Superſcription do they bear? It is enough if they pleaſe Fancy, or elſe have the allowance of ſuch whom they have in admiration. Can I then do leſs than bemoan the ſlightneſs and indifferency of Chriſtians about Truth, which is the only depoſite that God hath Concredited to the Saints? and awaken both my ſelf and others to buy the Truth at any Rate, but to ſell it or debaſe it at no Rate. Rob but God once of his Truth, and what Riches of Glory do you leave him? Is not he the God of Truth, and are not ye witneſſes,

Choſen

Choſen by himſelf, to give Teſtimony unto it? And can you diſhonour him more, than to make him like the Father of Lies, while you either ſpread the infection of Errour to others, or receive it from others into your own Boſom? Bethink therefore your ſelves, you who Deliver the Oracles of God, that you be not as the Lying Vanities of the Heathen, which deceived thoſe that repaired unto them: What comfort can you ever have in departing from the Form of ſound Words, and in Speaking Affected and Swelling words? which are one of Satans Lures to ſeduce into Errors? Who can ever underſtand *Behmens greeming of the inward Root?* or the Cantingof the *Famaliſts*, of being *Godded with God.* and *Chriſted with Chriſt?* And be you wiſe, O Chriſtians, in the differencing of ſuch *impure Gibberiſh* from the Holy Dialect of the Spirit. Let not ſuch Arts, which ſerve only as the light of the Fowler in the night, firſt to amaze the Birds, and then to bring them into the Net, enſnare and captivate you. Keep untainted from *Errours*, the Doctrines of Faith that you profeſs, which will be your glory; and the Duties that you perform to God, from *hypocriſie*, which will be your Comfort. Let not your intercourſe with Heaven be in

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ſuch Services that are guilded only with the words of Piety, which make them ſpecious to Men; and wholly deſtitute of ſincerity, which can alone commend them to God. Would it not be a piece of inexcuſable folly, for any to heap up a Maſs of Counterfeit Coyn, and then to value himſelf to be worth thouſands? And is it not far greater for Men to think that they have laid up much Treaſure in Heaven, and are rich towards God, by the Prayers that they have made, and other Services that they have done, which will all be found at the laſt day *droſs* and not *gold?* and will produce no other return, than the increaſe of a ſore Condemnation? O the thoughts of it are dreadful, to think how many will be found poor miſerable, and naked *Laodiceans*, who confidently preſume, that they are rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing. I cannot therefore but Pray, Lord help me to buy of thee Gold tried in the fire; and to get ſuch truth of Grace into my heart, that I may never be amongſt the number of thoſe who are juſtly hated by Men for hypocrites in this World, and ſhall be condemned by God for hypocrites in the other World.

Meditation

Meditation LIV.

Upon Health of Body, and Peace of Conſcience.

IT was an high and Eminent Teſtimony given by St. *John* to the Elder, *Gaius*, in the Prayer that he made for him, with an earneſt wiſh that *he might proſper, and be in health, even as his Soul proſpereth.* It is a Crown that I could heartily deſire might be deſervedly ſet upon the head of every one, that is called by that honourable Name of *Chriſtian*; and then I doubt not, but thoſe reproaches, which are daily caſt upon them, would fall as far ſhort of them, as ſtones that are thrown at the Sun; and thoſe Scandals, at which thoſe who are without do ſtumble, would be removed, and they alſo won, by their Converſation to the obedience of the Faith. But alas! I muſt invert the Apoſtles wiſh, and if I will wiſh true Proſperity to the Saints themſelves, Pray that their Souls may proſper, and be in health, as their Bodies proſper: So unequal is the welfare, for the moſt part, that is between the one and the

the other. Where may I finde the Man? or who can tell me what is his Name, whose care and observance hath so far prevailed, as to make his Soul in an equal Plight with his Body? and to keep the one as free from Lusts, as the other from Diseases? Who ever thought it necessary, that Pensions should be given to Oratours to dissuade Men from running into Infected Houses? or to be out of love with Mortal Poysons? Is not the least jealousie and suspition of such things Argument enough to secure themselves against dangers that may fall out? But is there not need to admonish and warn the best and holiest of Men, that they abstain from Fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul? Is it not requisite to bid the most watchful to take heed of a *Lethargy*, when the Wise Virgins are fallen asleep? Did not Christ himself Caution his Disciples against having their hearts at any time over-charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the Cares of this life? And yet the meanest of their Condition might seem to exempt them from such Snares? From whence then is it that the welfare and health of the Body should be more studiously endeavoured by all, than the well-being of the Soul in its Peace and Serenity, is almost by any? Is it not from the

the ſtrength of fleſhly Principles which abide in the beſt, and darken oft times the eye of the underſtanding, that it cannot rightly apprehend its own concernments? If there were but a clear inſight into that Bleſſedneſs, into which Peace of Conſcience doth Eſtate a Believer, it could not be but that, it being laid in the Ballance with the health of the Body, it ſhould as far over-weigh it, as a full Bucket a ſingle drop, or as the Vintage of Wine a particular Cluſter: True it is, that health of Body is the *Salt* of all outward bleſſings, which without it have no reliſh or ſavour; neither Riches, nor Honours, nor Delights for the Belly or Back, can yield the leaſt Pleaſure where this is wanting; So that the enjoyment of it alone may well be ſet againſt many other wants. And better it is to enjoy health without other additional-comforts, than to poſſeſs them under a load of Infirmities. And yet I may ſtill ſay, *Quid Palea ad Triticum?* What is the Chaff to the Wheat? Though it be the greateſt outward good that God beſtows in this Life, it is nothing to that Peace which paſſeth all underſtanding? Sickneſs deſtroys it, Age enfeebles it, and Extremities imbitter it. But it is the excellency of this divine Peace, that it worketh joy

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in Tribulation, that it ſupports in Bodily languiſhments, and creates confidence in death. Who is it that can throw forth the Gauntlet, and bid defiance to Armies of Trials, to perſecution, diſtreſs, famine, nakedneſs, peril, and ſword; but he whoſe heart is eſtabliſhed with this Peace? the ground of which is Gods free love; the Price of which is Chriſts ſatisfaction; the Worker of which is the Holy Spirit; and the Subject of which is a Good Conſcience. This was it that filled old *Simeons* heart with joy, and made him to beg a Dimiſſion of his Saviour, whom his eyes had ſeen, his arms embraced, and his Soul truſted in. What a ſtrange thing is it then, that there ſhould be ſo few Merchant-men that ſeek this goodly Pearl, which is far above all the Treaſures of the Earth, that are either hid in it, or extracted from it? Many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? but it is *David* only that Praies, *Lord lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us.* Others, like the ſcattered *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, go up and down gathering of Straw and Stubble; when he, like an *Iſraelite indeed*, in the Wilderneſs of this World, ſeeks *Manna*, which his Spirit gathers up, and feeds upon with delight; and then cries out, *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time,*

time, that their Corn and their Wine encreaſed. It is the love of God ſhed abroad in the heart, that doubleth the ſweetneſs of proſperity, and ſweetens alſo the bitterneſs of affliction: A wonder only therefore it is, not that few ſhould ſeek, but a much greater, that any in this World ſhould live without it. Can any live well without the Kings Favour, either in his Court or Kingdome? And yet there are many places wherein ſuch Perſons may lie hid in his Dominions, when the utmoſt ends of the Earth cannot ſecure them againſt Gods frowns. But if any be ſo profligate, as *Cleopatra*-like, to diſſolve this Jewel of Peace in his Luſts, and to drink down, in one prodigious draught, that which exceeds the World, in its price, and yet think they can live well enough without it, let them conſider how they will do to die without it. Sweet it is in life, but it will be more ſweet in death; It is not then the *Sun-ſhine* of Creatures, but *Saviour-ſhine* that will refreſh them. It is not then *Wine* that can chear the heart, but the Blood of *Sprinkling* that will pacifie it. The more Perpendicular Death comes to be over our head, the leſſer will the ſhadow of all Earthly comforts grow, and prove uſeleſs, either to aſſwage the pains of it, or to mit-

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tigate the fears of it. What is a fragrant Posie put into the hands of a Malefactor, who is in sight of the Place of Execution, and his Friends bidding him to smell on it? or, what is the delivering to him a Sealed Conveyance, that Intitles him to great Revenues, who hath a few minutes only to live? But, O what excess of joy doth fill and overflow such a poor Mans heart, when a Pardon from his Prince comes happily in to prevent the Stroak of Death, and to assure him both of Life and Estate? This is indeed as health and marrow to the bones. And is it not thus with a dying Sinner? who expects in a few moments to be swallowed up in those flames of wrath? the heat of which already scorch his Conscience, and cause Agonies and Terrours which imbitter all the comforts of life, and extract cries from him, that are like the yellings of the damned; I am undone, without hope of recovery! Eternity it self will as soon end as my misery: God will for ever hold me as his enemy, and with his own breath will enliven those Coals that must be heaped upon me. O what value now would one smile of Gods Face be to such a person? how joyfull would the softest whisper of the Spirit be that speaks any hope of Pardon, or Peace?

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would not one drop of this Soveraign Balm of Gods favour, let fall upon the Conſcience, heal and eaſe more than a River of all other delights whatſoever? Think therefore upon it, O Chriſtians, ſo as not any longer, through your own default, to be without the ſenſe of this Bleſſing in your hearts; that ſo in life, as well as in death, you may be filled with this *Peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding.* If Prayer will obtain it, beg every day a good look from Him, the light of whoſe Countenance is the only health of yours. If an holy and humble Walking will preſerve it, be more careful of doing any thing to loſe your Peace, than to endanger your health; remember that Peace is ſo much better than health, as the Soul is better than the Body.

But Grant, Holy Father, however others may neglect, or defer, to ſeek Peace with thee, and from thee; yet I may now find thy Peace in me by thy Pardoning all my iniquities, and may be found of thee in Peace without Spot, and blameleſs in the great Day.

Meditation LV.

Upon a Looking-Glaſs.

WHat is that which commendeth this Glaſs? is it the Pearl, and other precious ſtones with which the Frame that it is ſet in, is richly decked and enammelled? or is it the impartial and juſt repreſentation which it makes, according to the Face, which every one that beholds himſelf brings unto it; Surely the Ornaments are wholly forraign, and contribute no more to its real worth, than the Caſe doth to the goodneſs of the Wine, into which it is put; or the richneſſe of the Plate, to the Cordial in which it is adminiſtred. That for which the Glaſs is to be eſteemed, is the true and genuine reſemblance which it makes of the object, which is ſeen in it; when it neither flatters the Face, by giving any falſe Beauty to it, nor yet injures it, by detracting ought from it. To ſlight then or neglect the Glaſs for the meanneſs of its Caſe, and to value it only for its Gaiety, is no better than the folly of Children, or the bruitiſh Ignorance of thoſe, who prize the Book by the *Cover*

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and not by the *Learning* that is in it. To quarrel at the Glaſs for its returning a moſt exact and abſolute likeneſs of the Face that is ſeen it, is to deſpiſe it for its excellency, and can come from no other ground, than a conſciouſneſs of ſome guilt. Is it not for this very reſpect, that beautiful perſons both prize it, and uſe it, happily too much? It being the only means whereby they come to be acquainted with their own comlineſs, and to underſtand what it is that allures the hearts and eyes of all towards them. Who then but thoſe, whoſe features Nature hath drawn with a *Cole*, rather than a *Pencil*, or whom age and ſickneſs have robbed of what they formerly prided themſelves in, ſhun the familiar uſe of it? Or be angry when they look into it, as if it upbraided them, rather than reſembled them? *Phryne*, the famous Harlot, throws paſſionately away her Glaſs, ſaying, *Qualis fium, nolo; qualis eram, nequeo*; As I am, I will not; as I was, I cannot behold my ſelf: And yet is not this anger againſt the Glaſs, cauſeleſs? Doth it make the grey hairs on the head? Or the pock-holes and wrinkles in the face? Or doth it diſcover only what Age and Diſeaſes have done? And let them ſee what they cannot conceal from the eyes of others? Now,

what doth al this argue, but an averſeneſs in men to underſtand the truth of their own condition, and a willingneſs through ſelf-flattery to deceive themſelves, in thinking of what ever they have above what is meet? Great muſt needs be the impatiency againſt truth, when the ſilent reflections of a Glaſs, that vaniſh as ſoon as it is turned from, kindle ſuch diſlikes in the breaſt, as to make them to caſt it from them, for doing only the ſame thing to them, which it doth to others. Here methinks we may learn the ground, why carnal men are offended at the Word, both in putting ſcorn and contempt upon it, by the low and mean thoughts they have of it, or elſe by the anger which they expreſs againſt it, in throwing this bleſſed Mirrour from them, in as great, though not ſo good, an heat as *Moſes* did the Tables which he brake beneath the Mount. Some pick a quarrel with the plainneſs of the Word, as if it wholly wanted thoſe Embroideries of Wit and Art, that other Writings and Diſcourſes abound with, and had none of thoſe quaint and taking Expreſſions, that might win upon the affections of them that converſe with it. But, is not this to make ſuch uſe of the Word, as Young Children do of the Glaſs, more to behold the Babies

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in their own eyes, than to make any observance of themselves! Is the Word, writ or Preached, to have its reflections upon the *Fancy*, or upon the *Conscience?* Is it to inform only the *head*, or to reform the *heart?* If the inward man be the proper Subject of it, the *simplicity* of it conduceth more to that great end, than the *Contemperation* of it with humane mixtures. It is not the *painted*, but the *Crystal* Glass, by which the object is best discerned. Others again are not a little displeased with the Law or Word of God, because when that they look into it, both their *persons* and *sins* are represented in a far differing manner, from those conceptions they ever had of the one or of the other. In their own eyes they are, as *Absoloms*, without any blemish; but in this Glass they appear as deformed *Lepers*, and spred with an universal uncleanness; and who can bear it to see himself thus suddenly transformed into a Monster? Now, their sins, which they judged to be as little as the Motes in the Sun-beams, appear in amazing dimensions, and it is to them, not a *Looking-Glass*, but a *Magnifying-Glass*. Thoughts of the heart, glances of the eye, words of the lips, the irruptions of the passions are all censured by it, as deserving death, and

there is nothing can escape it, which as a Rule it will not guide, or as a Judge condemn. O how irksome must this needs be to carnal and unregenerate men, who abound with self-flatteries and presumptions of their own innocency and righteousness; who can with as little patience endure the convincing power of the Word, as sore eyes can the severe searchings of the light? We need not then wonder that the Word hath so many Adversaries, who take part with *Nature* against *Grace*, setting their wits on work by distinctions, and blended interpretations, to make it as a Glass breathed and blown upon, which yields nothing but dim and imperfect reflections. Is there any thing that the Word doth more clearly assert, than the loathsome condition of Mans Nature, with which he comes into the world? Is it not expressed by the filthiness of the birth which every Childe is encompassed with, when he breaks forth from the Womb? Is it not resembled to the rottenness and stench of the Grave, into which man is resolved, when he is said to dead in sins and trespasses? And yet how many, when they view themselves in this Glass, give out to the World, that they can see no such thing? *Cælestius* of old, thought that original sin was,

was, *Res quæſtionis, non fidei*, matter rather of Diſpute, than of Faith. And ſome of late have been more bold, calling it *Auſtins figment*. But the more injurious others are to this Divine Mirrour of Truth, the more it behoves every good Chriſtian to be ſtudious in vindicating it from the ſcorns of ſuch that deſpiſe it for its *ſimplicity*, and from the impieties of others that ſeek to corrupt its *purity*: and to ſhew that, for what cauſe others hate it, he moſt affectionately loves and prizeth it. *Thy word is very pure* (ſaith *David*) *therefore thy Servant loveth it.* Can you do God better ſervice, while you honour his Word, which he hath magnified above all his name? Or can you do your ſelves more right, than to judge your ſelves by that which is ſo pure, that it neither can deceive, nor be deceived. What though it preſent you with the ſad ſpectacle of your ſins, which may juſtly fill you with ſhame and ſelf-abhorrency; doth it not ſhew unto you alſo your Saviour, who is made unto us, Wiſdome, and Righteouſneſſe, and Sanctification, and Redemption? And cannot this joyful ſight raiſe you more than the other can caſt you down? O fear not to ſee your ſin, when you may at the ſame time be-

hold your Saviour? A mourning heart is the best preparation for spiritual joy, and serves to intend the height of it, as dark colours do to set off the Gold that is laid upon them. Give me therefore, O Lord, a broken and relenting heart, that Sin may be my Sorrow, and Christ may be my Joy; let all my tears drop from the eye of Faith, that I may not mourn without hope, nor yet rejoice without trembling. Let me see my Sins in the Glass of the *Law* to humble me, and my Saviour in the Glass of the *Gospel* to comfort me; yea, let me with open face so behold his glory, as to be changed into the same Image from glory to glory.

Meditation LVI.

Upon going up an high Mountain.

LOrd, *who ſhall dwell in the Mountain of thy Holineſs?* was a queſtion made by the Prophet *David*; but the anſwer returned unto it was by the Spirit of God, who can give the beſt Character of all thoſe who ſhall be received into *Claritatis Conſortium*, a fellowſhip of glory and bliſs, as *Tertullian* expreſſeth it. The *ſcituation* of the place, the *quality* of the perſons do both ſpeak it to be a work of difficulty, & diſcover alſo the ground of the paucity of the Travellers in whoſe hearts thoſe waies & aſcentions are, that ſeek to God. Moſt of the men of the world like *Abrahams* Servants, ſtay below at the foot of the hill, while he and his Son go up to worſhip; or chooſe rather, like *Ahimaaz*, to run the way of the Plain, than, with *Cuſhi*, the way that was craggy and mountainous. But few there be that ſee under what a neceſſity they lie of obtaining of heaven, and of dwelling in the Mountain of Gods holineſs, or underſtand the com-

ort that a continued progreſs in this Journey yields to thoſe to whom Salvation is nearer, than when they firſt believed. Can it therefore be amiſs to evince thoſe who are yet to make the firſt ſtep towards their own happineſs, what timely diligence they had need to uſe, that in the end they may not fall ſhort of it? And to encourage thoſe thar are on their way, that they may go from ſtrength to ſtrength, till they appear before God in *Sion*. And how may I better do either, than by ſhewing to one, the great *diſtance* in which they ſtand from heaven; and to the other, the good *proficiency* they have made, which is ofttimes as indiſcernable to themſelves, as the ſwift motion of the Ship is to them that are in it. There being no Complaint more frequent in the mouths of Saints, than that they have got no farther, than what many years ſince they judged themſelves to have attained unto. The *natural* mans diſtance is far greater thau he thinks of, ſo that he cannot eaſily ſtep into Heaven as he preſumes. He is not born near its Confines or Borders; but in the very extremity of remoteneſs from it. The diſtance is not only a diſtance of *place*, but of *diſproportion*, and *unlikeneſs*, whereby he is wholly unmeet for it: Yea, there is in him

him not onely a *diſſimilitude*, but a formal *contrariety* and *oppoſition* againſt heaven, which muſt be deſtroyed and taken away, before he can come thither. He is *darkneſs*, and Heaven is an *Inheritance in light*. He is a Sink of *filthineſs*, and Heaven is a place of *purity*; He is wholly *Carnal*, and the happineſs of Heaven is *ſpiritual*. And what *fellowſhip* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? What Communion hath light with darkneſs? And what Concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* Can it then be rationally thought an eaſie task to ſubdue this contrariety; and to make fleſh and blood meet to inherit heaven? Doth not the ſtraitneſs of the way, and the height of its aſcent, require a putting off, and a caſting away, every ſin that hinders from running the Chriſtian Race, and aſcending the holy Hill? Is it not neceſſary, that the oppoſition and diſſimilitude extending it ſelf over the whole man, that an anſwerable change ſhould be made in every part? I have read, that it is affirmed by excellent *Artiſts*, that though *gladneſs* and *grief* be oppoſites in nature, yet they are ſuch neighbours and *Confiners* in Art, that the leaſt touch of the Pencil will tranſlate a *crying* into a *laughing* Face. But ſuch is not the oppoſition between ſin and

grace.

grace, as to admit so facil a change in the turning of a Sinner into a Saint. It is not effected by a small touch made upon the *face*, but by a powerful work upon the heart, yea, upon the whole soul. Doth not the Scripture set it forth by a *New Birth* by a *New Creation*, which are of all mutations the greatest, and fully evince the vast distance that is between every natural man and Salvation? Deceive not your selves therefore, O ye loose *Professors*, nor ye found and presumptuous *Moralists*, who are apt to think that the shaddows of your duties and civilities will extend themselves to the top of this holy Mountain; and who when you read of the young man who answered Christ discreetly, that he was not far from the Kingdom of heaven, judge your selves, both in knowledge and practice, his Equals, and that you want not many steps of entring in to that blessed *Canaan* of rest and glory. For what will proximities or degrees of nearness avail, if the end it self be not attained?

Exaltations towards heaven, if they lift not into heaven, serve only to make the downfall the greater; and no man stumbles more dangerously, than he who is upon the brow of an high Mountain, in respect

reſpect of ruine. It is not then a ground for any to ſlack their pace, or intermit their diligence in heavens way, upon the confidence that they have not far to go. But rather to intend their care and paines, that they loſe not thoſe things which they have wrought, but that they may receive a full reward. And this let me ſay, if an apprehended nearneſs work not ſuch effects, it is a *dream* not a *reality*; a *preſumption*, rather than a *progreſs*; and will have as ſad an iſſue as the happineſs of that poor Fiſherman, who, ſleeping in the ſides of a Rock, dreamed that he was a King, and leaping up ſuddenly for joy, found himſelf miſerably broken & rent in the bottom of it.

But I fear that while I propound the difficulties, which are great, as well as many, intending thereby to ſhake only the Pillars of thoſe mens Confidence, who conſider neither the length of the way, nor the hardneſs of the task by which Salvation is attained; that I may diſhearten others, who after all their travel and labour, complain that they have ſtriven much and gained little; and that their hopes of laying hold on Eternal life do rather languiſh than encreaſe, doubting that the Journey is much too long for their ſhort life to finiſh. Gladly therefore I would lift up the

hands

hands which hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble knees, that they might be animated in the way, and not deſpair of the end. Now how can this be better done, than by giving ſuch Signs & Evidences that will beſt ſerve to manifeſt their motion and proficiency; the not diſcerning of which is the ground of thoſe fears of their ſpending their ſtrength in vain, and their labouring for nought? And is not this more readily perceived by looking downwards to thoſe objects that are below, than by looking upwards to the heavens, which will, after all climbing to them ſeem to be ſtill at the like diſtance as they were at firſt.

Suppoſe that a man after hard labour and toyl in reaching the top of ſome high and ſteep Cliff, ſhould conclude that he had wearied himſelf to no purpoſe, in the gaining of a delightful proſpect, becauſe the Sun appears to be at the ſame diſtance, and alſo of equal bigneſs, as when he was at the bottom of it; or that the Stars ſeem ſtill to be but as ſo many twinkling watch-lights, without the leaſt encreaſe of their dimenſions, or variation of their figure: Might he not be eaſily refuted, by bidding him to look down to thoſe Plains from whence he had aſcended, and behold into

to what narrow ſcantlings and proportions thoſe ſtately buildings and Towers were ſhrunk and contracted, whoſe greatneſs as well as beauty, he erewhile ſo much admired? And may I not with the like facility anſwer, and reſolve the diſcouraged Chriſtian, who calls in queſtion the truth of his heavenly progreſs, becauſe all thoſe glorious objects which his Faith eyeth, and his Soul deſires to draw nigh unto, ſeem ſtill to be as remote from him, as at his firſt ſetting out; by wiſhing him to conſider, whether he cannot ſay that though heavenlie objects do not encreaſe in their magnitude or luſtre, by the approach that he makes to them, that yet all earthly objects do ſenſibly loſe theirs by the diſtance that he is gone from them? And if he can but ſo do, ſurelie he hath no cauſe of deſpairing to obtain heaven, who hath travelled ſo far on the way, as to loſe well near the ſight of Earth. If once his faith hath raiſed him to that height, as to make the glorie of the world to diſappear, and to be as a thing of nought, it will quicklie land him in Heaven, where his fears of miſcarrying, as well as his laſſitude in working, will be ſwallowed up in an everlaſting reſt. And he that did once believe more than he ſaw, ſhall for ever ſee far more than ever he could

could have believed. Lord therefore do thou, who giveſt power to the faint, and to them that have no might, encreaſe ſtrength to me, who wait upon thee; renew my ſtrength, that I may mount up with wings as an Eagle, and may run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, until I come to the utmoſt bound of the everlaſting hills, and behold thy face in glorie.

Meditation LVII.
Upon the Bible.

Quintilian, who makes it a queſtion, why unlearned men in diſcourſe, ſeem oft times more free and copious than the Learned, gives this as the anſwer; That the one without either *care*, or *choice*, expreſs whatſoever their preſent thoughts ſuggeſt to them, *cùm doctis ſit electio & modus*, when the other are both careful what to ſay, and diſpoſe alſo their Conceptions in due manner and order. If any thing make this Subject difficult to my Meditation, it is not *want* but *plenty*; which is ſo great, as that I muſt, like *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, be forced to lay aſide much of that coſtly ſtuff which preſents it ſelf to me.

And

And what to refuſe, or what to take in, is no eaſie matter to reſolve. It will, I am ſenſible, require and deſerve alſo more exactneſs in chuſing what to ſay, and what not to ſay, concerning its worth and excellencie, and how to digeſt what is ſpoken, than what is meet for any to aſſume unto himſelf. I ſhal therefore account that I have attained my end, if I can but ſo imploy my thoughts as to encreaſe my veneration to this Book of God, which none can ever too much ſtudy, or too highly prize; and with which to be well acquainted, is not only the chief of *duties*, but the beſt of *delights*, and pleaſures. What would be our condition in this world, if we had not this bleſſed Book among us, would it not be like *Adams*, when driven out of *Paradiſe*, and debarred from the Tree of Life? Would it not be darker than the Earth without the Sun? If the world were fuller of Books, than the heaven is of Stars, and this only wanting, there would be no certain way and rule to Salvation: But if this alone were extant, it would enlighten the eyes, make wiſe the ſimple, and guide their feet in the paths of life,

True it is, that for many Years God made known himſelf by *Viſions*, *Dreams*, *Oracles*, to perſons of *noted holineſs*, that they

they might teach and inſtruct others; But it was while the Church of God was of ſmall growth and extent, and the perſons to whom Gods Meſſages were Concredited, of unqueſtioned Authority with the preſent Age. But afterward the Lord ſpake to his Church both by *Word* and *Writing*, the one uſeful for further *revealing* Divine Truths, and the other for the *recording* of them; that when the *Canon* was once compleated, all might appeal unto it, and none take the liberty of coining Divine *Oracles* to himſelf, or of obtruding his *fancies* upon others.

And were there no other uſe of this *Book of God* than this, that it ſhould be the Standard for the trial of all Doctrines, it were to be highly prized for its worth; without which the minds of men would be in a continual diſtraction, through the multitude of *Enthuſiaſts*, that would be pretending *Commiſſions* from heaven, none knowing what to believe in point of Faith, or what to do in point of Obedience, or whereby to difference the *good and evil Spirit* from each other. But this ſingle benefit (though it can never enough be thankfully acknowledged to God by us) is but as a Cluſter to the Vintage, or as an Ear of Corn to the Harveſt, in reſpect of thoſe many bleſſings tha

that may be reaped from it. Doth not *Paul* aſcribe unto it an univerſal influence into the Welfare of Believers, when he enumerates ſo many noble Ends for which all Scripture is profitable? What is it that makes any man wiſe to Salvation? Is it not the Scripture? What is it that inſtructs any in Righteouſneſs, and makes him perfect, and throughly furniſhed unto all good works? Is it not the Scripture? Is not this the only Book by which we come to underſtand the heart of God to us, and learn alſo the knowledge of our own hearts? Both which as they are the breaſts of myſteries; ſo they are of all knowledge the beſt, and fill the ſoul with more ſatisfaction than the moſt exact diſcovery of all created Beings whatſoever. What if a man could, like *Solomon*, ſpeak of Trees from the *Cedar* that is in *Lebanon*; to the *Hyſop* that groweth upon the Wall, and of Beaſts, Fowls, and Fiſhes, and yet were wholly ignorant of his own heart, would not the light that is in him be darkneſs? Or what if a man could reſolve all thoſe poſing queſtions in which the School-men have buſied themſelves concerning Angels, and yet know nothing of the God of Angels, would he not become as a ſounding Braſs, and a tinkling Cymbal? Is the knowledge

ledge of these things the great end for which our understanding was given unto us? Or is it any further desirable or profitable, than as it conduceth to the knowledge of God? Doth the *rectitude* of our actions, and the *holiness* of them, flow from the knowledge we have of any Creature, or from the knowledge of God? Is not his Will the Rule, and his Glory the End of all that we do? And how should we ever come to know what the good and acceptable will of God is, but by his revealing it unto us? Which he hath done most clearly and fully in this blessed Book of his, *the Scripture of truth.* That then which commends this Book, and renders it worthy of all acceptation, is the rich discoveries that it makes to us concerning so *Excellent a Being* as God is, whom it acquaints us with, in his *Nature*, *Perfections*, *Counsels*, and *Designs*, in relation to the Eternal Salvation of man. It contains no any thing that is mean or trivial; the matters in it are all of no less glory for any to behold, than of weightie *importance* for us to know.

Do we not read in it, with what *Majesty* God gave forth his Sacred Law, when Thunders, Lightnings, dark Clouds and Burnings, were used as Heralds in the promulgation

mulgation of it? And yet may we not again ſee the hidings of his power, in the wonderful Condeſcenſions of his *goodneſs?* How doth he *intreat*, *woo*, and *importune* thoſe whom he could with a frown or breath eaſily deſtroy; and purſue with bowels of mercy, ſuch whom he might in Juſtice leave, and caſt off for ever? Are there not in it *Precepts* of exact puritie, that are as Diamonds without flaws, and as fine Gold without droſs? In all other Books, they are as the moſt current *Coyns*, that muſt have their *Allays* of baſer Metals; But in this they reſemble the Author, who is *light*, in which there is no *darkneſs*, and a *Sun*, in which are no *ſpots*. Are there not in it *promiſes* of infinite value as well as goodneſs, in which rewards are given, not of *Debt*, but of *Grace*, and to ſuch who have cauſe to be aſhamed of their *Duties*, as well as their *Sins?* Are there not in it *Premonitions* of great faithfulneſs, in which God fully declares to men, what the iſſues of ſin will be? And proclaims a Judgement to come, in which the Judge will be impartial, and the Sentence moſt ſevere, againſt the leaſt offences, as well as againſt the greateſt; What is it that may teach us to ſerve God with *Chearfulneſs*, to *truſt* him with *confidence*, to *adhere* to him

him with *resolution* in difficulties, to *submit* to his Will with *patience* in the greatest extremities, that we may not be abundantly furnished with from this Book? It alone is a perfect *Library*, in which are presented those deep Mysteries of the Gospel, that Angels studie, and look into both with delight and wonder, being more desirous to pry into them, than of perfect ability to understand them. They are such, that had they not been revealed, could not have been known, and being revealed, can yet never be fully comprehended by any.

Was it ever heard, that he who was the maker of all things, was made of a Woman? That the Ancient of daies was not an hour old? That Eternal life began to live? That he to whose Nature Incomprehensibility both belong, should be inclosed in the narrow limits of the Womb? Where can we read but in this Book, that he who perfectly hates sin, should condescend to take upon him the similitude of sinful Flesh? That he, who was the Person injured by Sin, should willingly be the Sacrifice to Expiate the guilt of it, and to dye in stead of the Sinners? Are not these such Mysteries as are utter impossibilities to Reason? And at which, like *Sarah* it laughs, rather than, with *Abraham*, en-

tertain

tertains them with an an holy reverence and joy when made known? *Reaſon* is buſie in looking after Demonſtrations, and enquires how this can be, and then ſcorns what it cannot fathom: But *Faith* reſts it ſelf in the Revelations of God, and adores as a myſterie what he diſcovers. Yea, it makes theſe Myſteries, not only *Objects* of its higheſt Adoration, but the grounds of its ſure *comfort* and *confidence*. From whence is it, that Faith fetcheth its ſecurity againſt Sin, Satan, Death, and Hell? Is it not from this, that he who is the Saviour of Believers is God-man manifeſted in the Fleſh? That he who is their *Sacrifice* through the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, to purge their Conſcience from dead works to ſerve the living God? That he who is their *Advocate* did raiſe himſelf from the dead, and aſcended into the higheſt Heavens to make everlaſting Interceſſions for them? Can then any depreciate this Book, or abate the leaſt *Iota* of that aweful Eſteem which upon all accounts is due unto it, and be guiltleſs? Or can any neglect this Book as unworthy of their reading, which God hath thought worthy of his Writing; without putting an affront upon God himſelf, whoſe Image it bears, as wel as declares

his

his Commands? And yet I tremble to think how many *Anti-Scripturists* there be, who have let fall both from their Lips and Pens such bold Scorns, as if Satan stood at their right hand to inspire them. It was open Blasphemy, and worthy that *Antichristian Crue of Trent*, to affirm, *That though the Scripture were not, yet a body of saving Divinity might be made out of the Divinity of the School.* The prophaneness of *Politian* shall make his name to rot in a perpetual stench, who never read the Bible but once, and said, it was the worst time that ever he spent. And yet what are the fruits of his studies, but such as *Gellius* styles, *Scholica Nugalia*, a few trifling Commentaries, and Criticisms. More I could readily name of the same stamp, that have presumed Impiously to scoff at the *Revelations* of God, as others at his *Providennce*: but who can take pleasure to rake in a *Dunghil* that may enjoy the fragrancy of a *Paradice*; I shall therefore turn my thoughts from them, and, as having nothing to cast over their wickedness, shall, *Sanguinem pro velamento obtendere*, call my blood into my face, and spread it as a Vail in blushing for them, that should have blushed and been ashamed for themselves. But though the Word of God ceaseth not to be

be a reproach unto them, yet I ſhall bind it as a Crown unto me. Though they reject the Counſel of God againſt themſelves, yet I ſhall make his Teſtimonies my delight, and the men of my Counſell; and ſhall make the prayer of the *Pſalmiſt* to be my daily prayer, that God would open mine Eyes, that I may behold the hidden wonders that are contained in his Law.

Meditation LVII.

Upon the Spiritual Warfare.

WHo can either think or read what a Slaughter was made by one Angel in the numerous Army of *Sennacherib*, who in a night deſtroyed a hundred fourſcore and five thouſand Men, without reflecting upon the vaſt diſparity that is between the ſtrength and power which is in *Angelical* and Humane Beings? Great things are recorded in Sacred Hiſtory to be done by ſome of *Iſraels Judges*, and *Davids Worthies*; which would be looked upon as impoſſibilities, if the Spirit of God were not the Voucher of the

Truth of them. *Shamgar* ſlew ſix hundred *Philiſtims* with an Ox-Goad; *Sampſon* with the Jaw-bone of an Aſs laid Heaps upon Heaps; and *Adino*, the *Tachmonite*, lifted up his Spear againſt eight hundred, whom he ſlew at one time. But if theſe and the like remarkable Acquiſts, which others alſo are famed for, and have their Names Enrolled in the Liſt of Worthies, were as ſeveral parcels brought into one Total, how far ſhort would the foot of the Account be, in regard of this number which fell by the Sword of one Angel? Well then may the Scripture give to them the Names of Mighty ones, of *Principalities* and *Powers*, ſuch as excel in ſtrength. How quickly would a *Legion* of ſuch *Elohims* turn the whole World into a *Charnel*-houſe, filled with the Sculls and Bones of its Inhabitants; when a ſingle Angel can in a ſmall ſpace of time Change ſo many living Perſons into dead Carcaſes? How ſoon could they cloy and ſurfet the Grave it ſelf, which is as unſatiable as any of thoſe four things, that ſay, *It is not enough*! doth not all this therefore greatly heighten the wonder of the Spiritual Warfare, in which a frail Chriſtian, who hath not put off the infirmities of the Fleſh, doth yet go forth to Fight and War with the Com-

bine

binedHosts and Powers of Darkness? If young *David* were looked upon as an unequal Match by *Saul* and all *Israel*, to Combate with *Goliah*, the vastness of whose Stature, and Warlike Armes, had struck a terror into the whole Camp; how strange must it needs be deemed, that one, who to the outward view, is as any other Man, should Conflict not with Flesh and Blood, but with spiritual Wickednesses, which are for number many, and for Power great? What is one weak Lamb to resist the Lyons of the Forrest? or one harmless Dove to encounter with the Birds of Prey? As impotent as either of these, may the strongest of Men seem, to do ought to deliver themselves, or to offend any of their Spiritual Enemies when they assault them. But yet the resolved Christian, who is called to an holy Warfare by God, he doth such noble Exploits against Sin and Satan, as cause both a shout and Wonder in Heaven. Angels are affected to behold what a great fight of Afflictions he endures; what Repulses he gives to the reiterated Assaults of enraged Fiends; and when at any time worsted, how he Rallies again, recovers his Ground, and comes off both with *Victory* and *Triumph*, putting to Flight whole Armies of those *Infernal*

Anakims. It is worth our enquiry and knowledge then, to understand wherein this great Strength of a Christian lieth, which is not a *Natural*, but a *Mystical* and *Sacramental* strength, like *Sampsons.* But it lies not in his *Hair*, but in his *Head*, and in his *Armour*, which for the *Efficiency* of it, as well as for the *Excellency* of it, is called the *Armour of God.*

First, The *Head* of every Believer is Christ, who derives an influence of life and power worthy of himself. *I can do all things* (saith *Paul*) *through Christ that strengtheneth me*: There is a continued Efflux of vertue that goes from him, which to every Christian communicates a kinde of Omnipotency: He, who without Christ can do nothing, can in him do every thing. What a Catalogue of forces doth the *Apostle* muster up in the Eighth of the *Romans*, from which he supposeth an opposition may come? *Life*, *Death*, *Angels*, *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Things Present*, *Things to Come*, *Heighth*, *Depth?* And that he may leave out none, addes, *nor any Creature*: And yet pronounceth of them, that in all these *We are Conquerours*, *yea*, *more than Conquerours*: Which, as *Chrysostome* Interprets it, is to overcome them with ease, without pains, and without sweat.

O then that Chriſtians did but underſtand their own ſtrength, that they War in the power of his Might, who ſpoiled Principalities, and Powers, and made a ſhew of them openly, leading them as ſo many Pinnioned Captives after the Chariot of his Croſs, whereon he ſhewed many ſignal Teſtimonies of a Glorious Victory, in ſaving a Thief without Means; in Rending the Vail of the Temple from the top to the bottom; in Shaking the Earth, Cleaving the Rocks aſunder, opening the Graves, and cauſing many Bodies of Saints to ariſe. How greatly would theſe thoughts keep us from being weary and faint in our Spiritual War, and make our hands ſteady like the hands of *Moſes*, until the going down of the Sun of our Life.

Secondly, A Chriſtians ſtrength lies in his *Armour*, which when rightly put on, is able to preſerve him, that the evil one touch him not: There is no ſtanding in the Battel without it, and there is no fear of periſhing in it. When did ever Satan bruiſe or wound the head of him, that had the *Helmet of Salvation* for his Covering? or endanger the Vitals of him, who had put on the *Breſt-plate of Righteouſneſs*, and had *his loyns girt about with Truth?* What one fiery dart of the wicked did ever ſo

burn, that the *Shield of Faith* could not quench? or what way of sufferings could not he walk in, *whose Feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace?* Methinks when I consider that God who best knows the utmost both of Satans Power and Policies, is the Maker of the Armour: It is a voice becoming every Souldier of Christ, to say, Of whom should I be afraid? If he call us to Fight, and furnish us with Arms that are unable to defend us, or to offend our Enemies, he would suffer in his Glory, as well as we in our Comfort; he would then have his *champions* to be Satans *captives*, and the *Banner* which they spread in his Name, to become Hells *Trophy*. And can he, do you think, endure at once to see the destruction of his People, and the dishonour of his Name? Whosoever therefore thou beest, that art clad in this Armour of Proof, let me say unto thee, as the Lord to *Gideon*, *Go in this thy Might*, and fight the Battels of *Jehovah*. Take unto you that *Sword of the Spirit*, that will kill Lusts, and make the Devils to flee: It hath wrought Wonders in all Ages, and its Edg is still as sharp as ever it was. *By the Word of thy Lips* (saith *David*) *I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. It is written*, said our Saviour, when he Foiled his and our

Adversary,

Adversary, and put him to flight after his repeated Assaults. And in that great Battel that we read was fought between *Michael* and his *Angels*, and the *Dragon* and his *Angels*, he and his Host were overcome by *the Blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their Testimony.* Let every Man then have his Sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night: Put not off your *Armour* till you put on your *Robes.* It is made to be worn, not to be laid up, nor yet to be laid down, because our Warfare and our Life are both finished together; till then, there is not a *Truce*, much less a *Peace* for to be expected? Sooner may we contract a League with poisons, that, when taken down, they shall not kill; or with fiery Serpents and Cockatrices, that they bite not; than obtain the least respite in this War, in which the Malice of Cursed Devils, is as unquenchable as the fire of Hell, to which they are doomed. Lord, therefore do thou, who art the *Prince* of Life, the *Captain of Salvation* to all thy People, who hast finished thine own Warfare, and beholds theirs; enable me to Wrastle, that I may neither *faint* nor *fall*, but prevail unto Victory; shew forth thy Wonders in Me, whose Strength is Perfected in Weakness, that I may overcome the Wicked One.

And though the Conflict ſhould be long and bitter, yet make me to know, that the *ſweetneſs* of the Reward will abundantly Recompenſe the Trouble of the *Reſiſtance*; and the *Joy* of the *Triumph*, the *Bloodineſs* of the *War*.

Meditation LIX.

Upon going to Bed.

HOw like is the frail *Life* of Man to a *Day*, as well for the *inequality* of its length, as the *mixture* that it hath both of Clouds and Sun-ſhine? What a kinde of exact *Parelia*, are *Sleep* and *Death*; the one being the *ligation* of the Senſes, and the other the *Privation* of them? And of how near a kin is the *Grave* to the *Bed*, when the Scripture calls it by the ſame Name? when the *Clothes* that cover us, do the like office with the *Mould*, that muſt be caſt and ſpread over us? When therefore the *Day*, and the *Labours* which Man goeth forth unto are ended, and the darkneſs of the Night diſpoſes unto Reſt; what thoughts can any better take into his Boſome to lye down with, than to think, that Death, like the Beaſts

Beasts of the Forest may creep forth to seek its prey, and, that when it comes, there is no resistance to be made, or delay to be obtained? It spares no rank of Men; but slaies the *Rich* as well as the *Poor*, the *Prince* as well as the *Peasant*: The Glass that hath the Kings Face painted on it, is not the less brittle; neither are Kings, that have Gods Image represented in them, the less mortal. And whether it comes in at the *window*, or at the *door*, whether in some common, or some unwonted manner, who can tell? Many ofttimes fall asleep in this World, and awake in the other, and have no Summons at all to acquaint them whither they are going. And yet though every Mans condition be thus uncertain, and that his Breath is in his Nostrils, where there is as much room for it to go out, as to come in; how few do make their nights repose to serve as a *memorial* of their last Rest? or their Bed to stand for a *model* of their Coffin? Some pervert the Night, which was ordained to be a Cessation of the evils of Labour, to make it a season for their greater activity in the evils of sin. *They devise* (as the Prophet saith) *iniquity upon their Beds, and when the morning is light they Practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.* Others are easily brought

asleep, by the Riot and intemperance of the day, owning their unhappy rest not to the due of *Nature*, but unto the gross and foul vapours of sin, which more darken and eclipse their reason than their sleep? their *Dreams* having more of it in them than their *Discourse*. Others again, by their youth and health seem to be seated in such an elevation above death; as that they cannot look down from their *Bed* into the *Grave* without growing dizzy, such a steep Precipice they apprehend between life and death? Though this distemper doth not arise from the distance between the two terms, but from the imbecillity of their sense, which cannot bear the least thoughts of a separation from those delights and pleasures to which their Souls are firmly wedded. When therefore the most of men are such unthrifts of time, and like careless Navigators keep no *Journal* or *Diary* of their motions, and other occurrences that fall out. What need have others to make the Prayer of *Moses the Man of God*, their Prayer? *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* He who was learned in all the Sciences of the *Ægyptians* desires to be taught this point of *Arithmetick* of God; *so to*

number; as not to miſtake, or make any error in the account of life, in ſetting down *dayes* for *minutes*, and *years* for *dayes*. A Man would think, that a little *Arithmetick* would ſerve to caſt up ſo ſmall a number, as the dayes of him, whoſe dayes are as the dayes of an hireling, few and evil: and yet it is ſuch a Myſtery, that *Moſes* begs of God to be inſtructed in it, as that which is the chief and only knowledge. Yea, God himſelf earneſtly wiſheth this wiſdom to *Iſrael* his People, *O that they were wiſe; that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end*! Can we then render the night more ſenſeleſs, or keep the Bed unſpotted from thoſe Impurities that are neither few nor ſmall, than by practiſing duely this Divine Art, of numbring our dayes? which is not done by any ſpeculation, or prying into the time or manner of our death: but by meditating and thinking with our ſelves what our dayes are, and for what end our life is given unto us; by reckoning our day by our work, and not by our time; by what we do, and not by what we are: By remembring that we are in a continual progreſs to the Chambers of death; no Mans life being ſo long at the evening as it was in the morning. Night and day

are

are as two Axes at the root of our life, when one is lifted up, the other is down, without reſt: every day a Chip flies off, and every night a Chip; and ſo at length we are hewen down, and fall at the Graves mouth. O what a wide difference is there between thoſe that lye down with theſe conſiderations in their boſoms, and others, who paſs their time in pleaſures, and allow not the leaſt portion of it, to think what the iſſues are that a day or night may bring forth? How free are their Converſations from thoſe ſenſualities and luſts, which others commit in the day, and lye down with the guilt of them in the night? How profitably do they improve their time who count onely the *preſent* to be theirs, and the *future* to be Gods; above thoſe, that fancy youth and ſtrength to be a ſecurity of the ſucceeding proportions of their life? yea, how comfortable is death to thoſe, who are in daily preparation for it, as well as in expectation of it, above what it is to others, who are ſurprized by it in the midſt of thoſe delights, in which they promiſed ſelvs a continuance for many years? In what a differing frame and figure doth it appear to the one and to the other? The one behold it as a Bridge lying under their feet to

paſs

paſs them over the *Jordan* of this life, into the *Canaan* of eternal Bleſſedneſs; and the other as a Torrent, roaring and frighting them with its haſty downfal: gladly therefore would I counſel Chriſtians, who enter into the Church Militant by a *Myſtical* death, being buried with Chriſt by Baptiſm, and cannot paſs into the Triumphant, but by a natural death, to bear daily in their Minds the Cogitations of their inevitable end, as the beſt means to allay the fear of death, in what dreſs ſoever it comes, and to make it an inlet into happineſs, whenſoever it comes. As *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* made his Sepulchre in his *Garden*, that in the midſt of his delights he might think of death; So, let us in our *Chambers* make ſuch Schemes and Repreſentations of Death to our ſelves, as may make it familiar to us in the Emblems of it, and then it will be leſs gaſtly when we behold its true viſage. When we ſtrip our ſelves of our Garments, think, *That ſhortly* (as St. *Peter* ſaith) *we muſt put off this our Tabernacle*: I, and think again, what a likeneſs there is between our *Night-Clothes*, and our *Grave-Cloths*, between the *Bed* and the *Tomb*. What a little diſtance there is between *life* and *death*, the one being as an *Eye open*, and the other as an

Eye

Eye ſhut: in the twinkling of an eye we may be living and dead Men. O what ardors of luſts would ſuch thoughts chill and damp? what ſorrows for ſins paſt? what diligence for time to come to watch againſt the firſt ſtirrings of ſin would ſuch thoughts beget? It being the property of ſin to divert us rather from looking upon our end, than embolden us to defie it. Lord then make me to know my end, and the meaſure of my dayes, that I may in my own Generation ſerve the will of God, and then fall aſleep as *David* did, and not as others; who fall aſleep before they have done their work, and put off their Bodies before they have put off their ſins.

Meditation

Meditation LX.

Upon the Natural Heat, and the Radical Moiſture.

THere is a Regimennt of Health in the Soul, as well as in the Body; in the inward Man, as well as in the outward Man; they being both ſubjects incident to diſtempers, and that from a defect, or exceſs in thoſe qualities, which when duly regulated are the Principle, and Baſis of life and ſtrength. What preſerves and maintains the Natural life, but the juſt temperament of the *Radical Moiſture*, and the *innate heat?* and what again endangers and deſtroies it, but the heat devouring the moiſture, or the moiſture impairing the heat? When either of theſe prevail againſt each other, diſeaſes do ſuddenly follow. And is it not thus in the Soul, and inward Man? In it thoſe two ſignal Graces of *Faith* and *Repentance*, do keep up and cheriſh the Spiritual life of a Chriſtian; Faith being like *Calor innatus*, the Natural heat; and Repentance like *Humidum Radicale*, the Radical Moiſture. If then

then any by believing should exercise Repentance lesse, or in Repenting should lessen their Believing, they would soon fall into one of these most dangerous extreams, either to be swallowed up of sorrow and despair, or else to be puffed up with security and presumption. Is it not then matter of Complaint, that these two *Evangelical Duties* (as some Divines have called them) which in the practise of Christians should never be separated, should be lookt upon by many to oppose, rather than to promote, each other in their operations: Some out of weakness cannot apprehend what consistency there can be between Faith and Repentance, whose effects seem to be contrary, the one working Peace and Joy, the other Trouble and Sorrow; the one Confidence, the other Fear; the one Shame, the other Boldness. Now such as these, when touched with the sense of their sin, judge it their duty rather to mourn, than to believe; and to feel the bitterness of sin, than to taste the sweetness of a Promise, and put away comfort from them, lest it should check and abate the over-flowings of their sorrow. Others again, whether out of heedlessness, or wilfulness, I will not determine, when they behold the fulness of Grace, in the blotting

blotting out of sin, the freeness of Grace in the healing of Backslidings, they see so little necessity of Repentance, as they think it below (as they so speak) a Gospel Spirit to be troubled for that which Christ hath satisfied for. It is not Repentance that they should now exercise, but Faith; Sorrow seems interpretatively to be a jealousie of the truth of Gods Promise in forgiving, and of the sufficiency of Christs Discharge, who was the surety, who hath not left one single Mite of the *Debt* for believers to Pay. Sorrow therefore seems to them as unseasonable, as it would be for a Prisoner to mourn, when the Prison door is opened, and himself set free from debt and bondage.

Tuhs this Pair of Graces and Duties, concerning which I may say, as God did of *Adam*, it is not good that either of them should be alone; are yet divided often times in the *practise*, though indissolubly linked together in the Precept. Fain would I therefore evidence to the *weak* the *concord* of these two graces, in respect of *Comfort*: and to the *wilful* the necessity of them both, in order unto Pardon.

Unto the *weak* therefore I say, That the Agreement between faith and Repentance, doth not lie in the immediate impressions, which

which they make upon the Soul, which are in some respects opposite to each other, but in the *Principle* from which they arise, which is the same, the Grace of Christ; & in the end, which is the same the Salvation of Man. & in *habitude* and subordination that they have one to another: for Repentance is never more kindly than when it disposeth us to the exercise and actings of Faith; whose comforts of joy, Peace and Serenity of heart, are as Gold which is best laid upon sad and dark colours; or as the Polished *Diamond*, that receiveth an addition of lustre from the watering of it. Gods Promise is, that the Believing *Jews*, who look upon Christ by an eye of faith, shall be also great mourners, *They shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his onely Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born*:

Unto the *careless*, or *wilful*, I also say, That God never forgiveth sin, but where also he giveth a Penitent and Relenting Heart; So that though Faith hath a peculiar nature in the receiving of pardon, applying it by way of Instrument, which no other grace doth; yet Repentance is the *express formal* qualification that fits for pardon, not by way of *Causality* or *merit*, but by way of *means*, as well as of

Command

Command, which ariſeth from a *Condecency* both to God himſelf, who is an holy God, and to the nature of the Mercy, which is the taking and removing of Sin away. Never dream then of ſuch free grace, or Goſpel-mercy, as doth ſupercede a broken and a contrite heart, or take off the neceſſity of ſorrowing for ſin. For Chriſt did never undertake to ſatisfie Gods wrath in an *abſolute* and *illimited* manner, but in a well *ordered* and *meet* way, *viz.* the way of Faith and Repentance. How elſe ſhould we ever come to taſt the bitterneſs of ſin, or the ſweetneſs of grace? How to prize and eſteem the Phyſician, if not ſenſible of our diſeaſe? How to adore the love of Chriſt, who redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, by being made a Curſe for us, if not burdened with the weight of our Iniquities? Yea, how ſhould we ever give God the glory of his Juſtice, in acknowledging our ſelves worthy of death, if we do not in a way of Repentance judge our ſelves, as the Apoſtle bids us? Was not this that *David* did in that ſolemn Confeſſion of his? in which he cryes out, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight; that thou mightſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and clear when thou judgeſt.* Can I therefore

wiſh

wish a better wish to such who are unsensible of their sins, than *Bernard* did, to him whom he thought not heedful enough about the judgements of God, who writing to him, instead of the common salutation, wishing him, *Salutem plurimam*, much health, said, *Timorem plurimum*, much fear; that so their confidence may have an allay of trembling? Sure I am that it is a mercy that I had need to pray for on my own behalf; and I do, Lord make it my request, that my Faith for the pardon of sin may be accompanied with my sorrow for sin, and that I may have a *weeping eye*, as well as a *believing heart*, that I may mourn for the evils that I have done against my Savionr, as well as rejoyce in the fulness of mercy that he hath shewed to me in a glorious Salvation.

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